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THE RIDDLE OF RUSSIA

CAUTION is a virtue seldom needed in estimating the news of German doings. When Hitler strikes, he does it with all his might. His occupation of Rumania is no exception. The capital and the oilfields are now in the complete possession of his troops, which arrived partly by air, partly by barges down the Danube, and partly through Hungary. It is now said that ten divisions, about 150,000 men, are on their way and this may be true, since a smaller force would hardly suffice to impress the Turks. The most significant news may be that a naval contingent, equipped with submarines carried in sections, has established itself on the Black Sea coast near Constanza. This is a challenge both to the Russians and the Turks, who tend to regard these waters as their *mare clausum*. Both their fleets are weak by modern standards.

The key to the political problems raised by this occupation lies in Moscow. In spite of denials, the Germans seem to have made this move without consulting or informing the Russians. So much, but no more, the official Tass Agency has told the world. This involves, of course, a breach of the Russo-German Pact, which provided for habitual consultation. It does not follow that Hitler wishes to quarrel with Stalin. It is characteristic of the Nazi technique first to carry out a brutal act by surprise and then to follow it up by more or less amiable offers of compensation. Rumour says, plausibly enough, that the Germans are now offering Stalin Persia, Afghanistan and even, it may be, India, as his sphere of influence, when the British Empire is destroyed. This would give him a road to the open seas, though a poor one, through the Persian Gulf.

But even if bait of this kind is offered, can the Russians under any circumstances allow the Germans to control the Turkish Straits? That would contradict their historical traditions and it would expose some of their most valuable territory to attack, including eventually the Caucasian oilfields. Stalin may not have taken his decision yet, but some items of news suggest opposition. Russian troops in Bukovina and Bessarabia are being massed along the frontiers and air-fields hastily constructed. Negotiations between Moscow and Angora are said to aim at an alliance for the defence of the Turkish Straits. This might deter the Germans, at least for a time, since it would involve war with Russia along an immense front from Memel to Constantinople. They may have no better use for their land troops, since we are hardly yet ready to use the opportunity to attack in the West, but we can keep a great part of their air force busy. On the other hand, if Hitler did dare to expose his eastern flank to a Russian attack, the prize for him and for Mussolini would be dazzling —the prestige value of Constantinople, the strategic value both of the Straits and of the Greek ports and islands, a land route, however long and difficult, down towards the Suez Canal, and finally access to the oil of Irak. For all this a bold strategist would face a considerable risk.

It is, then, possible, but by no means certain, that Stalin can, if he chooses, veto any German move across the Straits into Asia Minor. But it lies with him and with him alone to stop it. We are not sure that the Greeks and Turks, if left to fight alone, would try to stop it, but, if they did, we should not rate their chances of success very high. We doubt neither the wish of the Turks to resist, nor their legendary courage. But they are poorly armed and have only the nucleus of an air force. The same thing is true of the Greeks, who lack the stubborn temper of the Turks. They would be exposed to a simultaneous attack from Bulgaria and from Italy through Albania. Their Fascist dictator, General Metaxas, has latterly seemed to be a genuine neutral, but, until the eve of this war, he stood with both feet in the German camp. He has mobilised, but it may be significant that he has not begun to create an A.R.P. service. As for the Turks, though their interests make for resistance and their sympathy for our cause is doubtless genuine, it would be foolish to forget that their treaty with us required them to declare war, if another Power became an aggressor in the Mediterranean. This Italy did, but the Turks remained

neutral. In any event, whatever physical advantages Nature may have given them at the Straits and in the Taurus mountains, can we, on a sober view, expect them to stand up to the attack of a German mechanised army, with its dive-bombers and its tanks? If the Italians, with German storm-troops to aid them, were simultaneously attacking in Egypt, we could do little, save from the sea, to help the Turks. It follows that Stalin is the arbiter of this situation. If, without reserve, he backs the Turks and is ready to close the road from Europe into Asia, he *may* be able (we do not put it higher) to stop the Germans. But that means the risk of war.

Stalin, in this emergency, has to think of the Far East as anxiously as he thinks of Europe. The Japanese, of course, would like to keep him quiet. Our reading of Prince Konoye's policy is that what he desires is, above all, a free hand to expand in the South—in other words to seize the Dutch East Indies, which would involve an attack on Singapore and might bring in the United States as a belligerent. To this end he has, once more, made an attempt, which has failed or will fail, to come to terms with Marshal Chiang Kai-shek. There is no longer much doubt that Moscow and Tokio are discussing a mutual treaty of non-aggression. How much this would involve is not yet clear—presumably a *modus vivendi* at least round Mongolia and Manchuria. It might assign to either party its sphere of influence in China proper. Mr. Molotov says that Russia has no intention in any case of changing her policy in the Far East—which means, we suppose, that Soviet help to China will continue. What Japan makes of this, we do not know. But both parties apparently wish to reach an understanding. Simultaneously, some highly interesting talks are going on in Washington. Mr. Sumner Welles is engaged with the Russian ambassador in clearing away sundry causes of friction between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. This is a most fortunate sign, but it may be the prelude to a new phase of active co-operation between these two, which should be helpful to China and might also cause Japan to hesitate before embarking on further aggressions. We need not try to reconcile the seemingly contrary tendencies in these two sets of negotiations. Soviet policy is first to keep out of war.

India and Siam

An Indian correspondent draws our attention to a forgotten aspect of the coming struggle with Japan, which he believes to be imminent. He is sure that the Japanese will use their hold over Thailand (Siam) to attack Singapore from the North. There are available for her use several submarine bases and airports. He reports some talks that have taken place between Siamese and Indians. The former would not admit that they positively favoured Japan. They were indifferent. Two imperial rivals would be at war, the one as little sympathetic to any weak nationality as the other. That is not the view of Indians, who have their preferences, if they must submit to a master. "But why," asks our correspondent, "must Indians submit to a master? If only you would reconcile India, and come to terms with Congress, we Indians could rally the whole East, including Siam, to your support. The case is not hopeless even in Siam. Don't forget that in its towns immigrant Chinese form nearly a third of the population." We pay rather highly for the smiles of Mr. Jinnah and his Muslim League.

Economic Notes (By an Industrial Correspondent)

The Government, with its revised personnel, is already beginning to think a little about after-war problems, especially demobilisation, as well as about carrying on the war. This may seem premature, with the peace still to all seeming a very long way off; but in fact the problems of reconstruction have been brought a good deal nearer by air bombardment. As sections of cities are knocked down, we have to begin considering whether and where to build them up again; and such problems as the future location of industry and the replanning of our local government system acquire an urgent importance. If we are not careful, we may find ourselves rebuilding on worse lines than ever (because of defects of materials and skilled labour) just those "Wens" which housing reformers have been trying for a generation to get swept away. Again, as we have to plan large-scale evacuations of adults as well as children, the faults of our existing local government arrangements become more and more glaringly evident, and new forms of organisation have to be improvised, as in London, on a basis which will obviously influence the turn of post-war reconstruction.

* * *

One serious problem arising out of air raids—serious for the workers—is the loss of earnings when work is badly interrupted. In a few highly paid war trades the workman maybe can afford to stand the racket; but there are the cases in which, owing to the urgency of the work, he is most likely to be called upon to carry on, raid or no raid. The wages problem is most difficult in trades in which wages are relatively low, and in which, because the jobs are less nationally important, fewer precautions have probably been taken. The National Arbitration Tribunal is now having to deal with quite a number of claims for the payment of wages during periods when work has to be suspended. Its policy seems to be that provision should be made for working extra hours at normal rates to make up for lost time, within certain limits, and that full payment should be made for hours lost up to so many, and a proportion of the normal wage for further hours lost. But there is no uniformity of practice in different trades.

* * *

The German war on our merchant shipping still goes on with too much success, though the latest figures show a small improvement. The tonnage list is indeed much less than it was in the last war, at the height of the submarine campaign; but the monthly average is three times what it was during the early months of the year. Germany's new bases and the preoccupations of our fleet in the Mediterranean and the Channel, together with the defection of the French, have made the task of giving adequate protection very difficult. The American destroyers now coming into commission will help; but there will be the fewer raw materials to spare for non-essential trades until we get the submarine and mine dangers better in hand. Attention has been drawn off from this side of the war by the more spectacular developments in the air; but in the long run the shipping position matters most of all. The continued adequacy of food and other supplies shows that nothing very bad has happened so far; but we cannot afford to let sinkings go on indefinitely at the present rate.

* * *

Representatives of the Hosiery Manufacturers are reported to have met the new President of the Board of Trade. The reason for their representations was the confusion into which the Limitation of Supplies (Miscellaneous) Order has thrown the trade and the markets. The suspicion of coming shortages engendered by this Order and the invitation to evasion extended by the Chancellor to buyers with ready cash in announcing but not imposing the Purchase Tax seems to have had their inevitable results. The public emptied the shelves and those who were poor or patriotic (or ignorant) are sometimes unable to cover their legitimate needs. The manufacturers also point out that the drastic cut in supplies to civilians at home would increase unemployment. All this could and should have been foreseen. The limitation of supplies to civilians at home has sense only if either the labour and plant freed is turned over to defence purposes, or the product is exported. And supplies can be limited equitably only if either a draconian taxation policy combined with a blocking of capital assets ensures a scientific curtailment of demand or if demand is directly rationed. The debacle of the programme of the Board of Trade is a result of inadequate co-ordination between Departments. The Board of Trade throws people out of employment by curtailing the home market. The Treasury appreciates the pound, thus impeding exports. The Ministry of Labour does not provide for adequate re-training schemes. There is desperate struggle for survival in the trade. The process of elimination is based on financial rather than technical grounds. And whilst elimination proceeds, "overhead" labour is not set free. Cost per unit increases as turnover shrinks. Prices in present conditions tend upwards. The process is repeated in the sphere of distribution whence we could mobilise fully a million people without endangering the standard of life. The traders condemned to economic death, moreover, represent a dangerous element in the "moral" front. Is this all necessary? Schemes could be devised enabling quick mobilisation of our vast potential power on the basis of decent compensation and fair distribution of sacrifice. But—obviously—this is not possible with the present methods of unsystematic and mostly negative compulsion mixed with exhortation and whitewashed by publicity.

WAR AIMS

WE all know what Mr. Churchill means when he says that we fight first for survival. Conquest by Hitler would mean not merely the end of the Empire, about which the mass of English people mind comparatively little, but the actual absorption of Britain in the Third Reich. No hardship is too great to avoid the fate of France, or, it might even be, of Poland. But when Mr. Churchill goes on to say that the time is not ripe for any statement of war aims beyond the very general remarks about a free and better post-war world which are now oratorical commonplaces, we understand his hesitation, but differ profoundly. True, no blue-print of post-war Europe can be usefully published to-day; we have first, as Mr. Churchill says, to convince people that we shall be in a position to play any part in its construction. But when he adds that "world opinion, so far as it is free, is thoroughly behind us" and that no one thinks that we are fighting for the *status quo*, he seems to overlook that those we most want to convince are just those who are not free. Most of the Indian people, for instance, emphatically fear that we are fighting for the *status quo*. Little has been said since this war began to bring hope of a better world to the submerged in the countries which Hitler has conquered. Those whom we recognise as the future governments of Poland and Czecho-slovakia gave no such earnest of revolutionary intentions. And there is another body of opinion, highly concerned with war aims—the masses of London and of other towns, who are suffering bitterly with no very clear view that the end of the war will mean the end of the system that has condemned them to slums; poverty and war. Does Mr. Churchill include these among the free who do not imagine the present Covernment is fighting for the *status quo?* The most urgent of war aims are social changes at home during the war.

Mr. Churchill's picture of the future is forbidding, as in honesty it must be. Whatever the military successes or failures, the prospect is formidable enough for the dark winter months ahead. Viewed from the purely military standpoint, Mr. Churchill finds hope in the rapidly increasing aid of the United States. He hopes for air supremacy next year and victory, perhaps, in 1942. Even so, we doubt—and we are sure that Mr. Churchill's expert advisers doubt—the possibility of a purely military conquest. To see nothing better than an aerial battle fought to a finish between the Axis Powers on the one side and British and American imperialism on the other is to despair of civilisation. The hope in this war—and the only hope in our view—lies in the discontent and ultimately in the revolt of submerged people everywhere. If that is to come and to work for our advantage, the sooner we make clear that we lead such a revolution the more possible our task. That has been clear to us and to many others ever since the plans of the Axis were made clear by the anti-Comintern Pact and by the attacks on the peoples of Spain and China. For three years those who understood the meaning of the anti-Comintern Pact have urged that if the leaders of the pluto-democracies were Democrats and not Plutocrats they would put themselves at the head of a movement of world liberation—beginning with the liberation of their own proletariat at home and in their empires and extending their appeal to the oppressed in many countries. The rulers of France preferred capitulation; Mr. Chamberlain and his government preferred futile guarantees to such crumbling and corrupt governments as those of Poland and Rumania. They lost Russia; they appealed to Fascism against Fascism. They lost every propaganda possibility. To-day it is too late to repair the past. The war which might have been prevented is here. But it is not too late to begin to rally those who suffer under Hitler.

A new factor enters into the calculation with the approach of the United States to the democratic side. Mr. Roosevelt represents to the full the generous sympathy with oppressed peoples abroad, which is as characteristic of twentieth-century America as it was characteristic of nineteenth-century Britain. The United States can now speak to Europe with a commanding voice if she will. The President can make the publication of war aims with which America can agree, the necessary condition of full American support. If Hitler refuses those terms the German masses will know that he is leading them towards inevitable disaster.

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THE DANGER OF DISEASE

WE are facing a winter campaign which will be waged not by the R.A.F., nor by the Army nor by the Navy, but by the doctors on the Home Front. The epidemic season is almost upon us and the implications are not pleasant to contemplate. "Unless effective measures are promptly taken," says *The British Medical Journal*, echoing the fears of every doctor, "we can foresee with the approach of winter a state of affairs in respect of contagious and infectious diseases which may prove more devastating than the Blitzkrieg."

That, bluntly, is the grim fact—that more people may be killed by going into shelters than will be killed by bombs if they stay out of them, unless the Government measures protecting the shelter-population are drastic and immediate. Even then much will depend on the individuals, and how far they will co-operate. The Ministry of Health has worked out plans and Mr. Malcolm MacDonald has been ready and willing to place the facts frankly before Parliament. Indeed it is a public duty to let the people know the menace which has to be countered. Some of us, including myself, have shirked that unpleasant responsibility although, since the Blitzkrieg started and people went underground to spend the hours of darkness in most unhealthy conditions, the dangers have been manifest.

It is poor consolation that the Germans and indeed the whole of Europe are facing the same risks. The supreme cynicism was when I was approached, after I had spent the night "shelter-crawling" in East London, and asked to write (not by THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION or *Daily Herald*) an article on "Germs Are Our Allies," because the Nazi press and radio were complaining that the R.A.F. night raids had started an influenza epidemic in Berlin. So far from being our allies, germs are waging a common offensive against both sides and against neutrals alike.

Our first and gravest anxiety is produced by conditions in the shelters. The foetid atmosphere of most of them is like the germ-incubation rooms of a bacteriological laboratory, only the germs are not in sealed flasks but hit you in the face in a mixed barrage. The sick and the healthy are huddled together indiscriminately. No shelter warden, even if he knew, has the authority or the courage, at present, to refuse bomb-sanctuary to germ carriers and infectious people. The multiplicity of diseases which may be mingling in the vast communal shelters is too awful to contemplate.

Thousands have no opportunity even to change their clothes from one week-end to another. They never see their homes—many of their homes no longer exist—because their time is divided between work and shelter. They go off to work from the shelter in the early hours of the morning, even before dawn and the all-clear. They return at dusk as the sirens go. The lice and flea population is multiplying and that is alarming the doctors. Lice-borne diseases are among the worst enemies of mankind. Fortunately, our island position keeps us safe from typhus, but the breakdown of the world health organisations which kept us posted about the appearance of such diseases abroad makes it all the more important that incoming seamen should be segregated in special shelters. As it is, in at least one big communal shelter, seamen and lascars come in with the rest, while in another dock district a big arch in which bunks have been already installed is reserved for lascars, not for reasons of colour, but because the Port doctors have intervened.

Doctors are concerned about the risks of cerebro-spinal meningitis, the dreaded "spotted fever." It is a "barrack-room disease" which manifests itself at the outset of every war because soldiers are brought together in the confines of the barrack-room. It has been epidemic for a year, although, for obvious reasons, little public attention has been drawn to it. Indeed in one week during last winter the figure was the highest in the records of British public health. Fortunately, the death-rate has been spectacularly reduced by the use of M & B 693, which has been described as "the miracle drug." In other years, the death-rate has ranged from 30 to 80 per cent. Now it is about 3-8 per cent.

Conditions which exist in the big communal shelters at present have been much worse than any to be found in modern barracks, where regulations provide for the proper spacing of beds to prevent throat and nose spray from spreading from one bed to the next. The range and life of the germ in the atmosphere is limited.

This is the "cycle-year" for influenza. That is to say, we were due for an epidemic anyway. Now we have to be prepared to deal with it in most unfavourable conditions—crowded shelters, stuffy, blacked-out factories and offices—with resistance lowered by war-strain. We ought to be preparing to meet it with the thoroughness

of a major military campaign. For we have the grim reminder of the world-epidemic of the winter which followed the last war. More people died of influenza in India alone than the total losses of the belligerents in battle and the total number of deaths throughout the world exceeded the 25,000,000 deaths in the Black Death of the Middle Ages. The figures are not truly comparable, however, because the Black Death disposed of a quarter of the population of Europe, while the 'flu epidemic sought its victims throughout the whole world, reaching even to the remote islands of the Pacific, where a fourth of the people of Samoa died.

Another serious aspect which has to be faced is the fact that when hospitals were required in expectation of heavy raid casualties many tubercular patients were evacuated to their homes. Dr. P. L. T. Bennett, Tuberculosis Officer for Fulham, in *The British Medical Journal*, draws attention to the prevailing practice of T.B. patients seeking refuge in public air-raid shelters and of joining neighbours for "company" in adjacent Anderson shelters.

"Owing to local incidents due to explosive, fire or delayed action bombs, patients have had to be removed on mattresses to various shelters," he writes, "to remain there. The crowded condition of shelters, especially in thickly populated districts, and the fact that infants and children are taken into them and therefore come into close contact with many open and advanced cases of phthisis suggest the possibility of considerable danger of infection of the massive type."

He urges the immediate necessity of prevailing upon patients to "stay put" in their homes, where the risks of death from bombs are less than the almost-certainty of death from their own disease, hastened by their removal to shelters.

Recently, when I was doing a "dawn patrol" with Mr. Robert Boothby, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Food, it was raining heavily. The "Raiders Passed" went and the tens of thousands of East Londoners poured out of the shelters, without coats, because it had been dry when they went in, and carting their bedding. They and their bedclothes were getting soaked and they were going home to fireless, gas-less houses where they had little prospect of getting thoroughly dried. We saw, too, shivering men going off, after a night in the hot fug of the shelters, through the rain to work in wet clothes for the rest of the day.

It is not surprising, therefore, that in every shelter I have been in during the past six weeks I have heard that hacking "shelter cough" and the wheezy sleep of the bronchial cases. The coughs are not confined to those swarming "Eastern Bazaars" of the East London communal shelters. It is just as common, though less likely to be neglected, in the cellars of luxury hotels and blocks of flats. Equally common are the complaints of "shelter throats" which may mean anything from tonsilitis to diphtheria.

Again, on another night-tour with Miss Ellen Wilkinson, now Under-Secretary for Home Affairs, in charge of shelters, we found the First Aid post in a tube, dealing with oozing bites which were blamed on mosquitoes. It is possible that mosquitoes had flourished in that hot, muggy atmosphere. Fortunately our native variety will not carry malaria, but in dockland constant watch will have to be kept for imported *anopheles* mosquitoes which are the malaria-carriers. Anyway, there is no excuse for allowing mosquitoes to breed in tubes or any other kind of shelters.

Desperately urgent is the need for rapid improvement and extension of sanitation. The conditions which have prevailed up till now in some of the shelters have been primitive and, in the year 1940, criminal. Beds and blankets have lain in filth. Filth has been trodden into them by the traffic of feet. And filth-borne diseases like typhoid are among our greatest menaces. Pneumonia, rheumatism, rheumatic fever, bronchitis, pleurisy and all the other chill-diseases have to be combated by proper heating and ventilation.

The debit-side is depressing. On the credit-side, we have the consolation that this is the Golden Age of Medicine. The Government plans for dealing with shelter conditions must be drastic and comprehensive. The medical profession must be mobilised to meet the biggest challenge to public health which it has had to face since, with the legacy of Pasteur, it checkmated pestilence.

Lord Horder, with his colleagues of the Shelter Committee which toured the refuges and took stock of the problem, reported at least three weeks ago. I understand that it urged the most vigorous insistence on the evacuation of children and of mothers and young children, as well as the aged and infirm. It also recognised that the public's demand for large communal shelters should be accepted—as indeed it must be—and that they should be made as secure as possible and scheduled as "official."

They should be inspected regularly by the Medical Officers of Health, properly equipped with sanitary arrangements, cleansed daily by a special squad of cleaners and adequately ventilated, lighted and warmed. They stressed the urgent need for the conditioning of deep shelters. If necessary, adjacent boroughs should pool their accommodation. (Another argument for the over-riding Regional Welfare Boards.) Safe basements, provided for the day-staffs of big industrial and commercial concerns, should be converted into dormitory shelters. People should, as far as possible, be induced to stay in their Anderson, surface, or reinforced-basement shelters or in strengthened rooms in their own homes, although the psychological urge to get underground away from noise and the feeling of insecurity is recognised.

Lord Horder's Committee attaches much importance to the shelter marshals, who should be paid, whole-time officials, chosen from the wardens' service for their proper human understanding and given a status which would entitle them to the help of the police and authority over the shelterers. First-aid posts should also be provided for every shelter over a certain capacity, and local panels of medical people should be set up to keep constant vigilance over the hygienic standards and to watch for obvious cases of infection.

There is manifestly a need for medical and nursing staffs in the communal shelters and not only for First-aid posts which are primarily casualty stations, but for consulting rooms where the doctors could examine and diagnose cases and, where necessary, insist upon the removal of suspects to hospital or to special sick-bay shelters.

In London there is already a highly efficient and well-organised school medical service, now being wasted while the schools are closed, which could be the basis of such a medical organisation, but I would go further and demand an extension of the Emergency Medical Service, planned and conceived to deal with casualties, into a Regional Medical Service, forerunner of the inevitable State Medical Service which must come out of this war. The doctors in the heavily bombed areas have lost most of their private practices. They would welcome a service which would give them an assured income. Furthermore, the hospitals of the Emergency Medical Services must be prepared to provide for isolation cases and for those unfortunate tubercular patients. They must provide for thousands of cases which would normally be treated in their own homes by their private doctors but who, bedridden, cannot be, or will not be, left in their beds when the sirens go. Ambulance services must be available equally to sick cases and to casualties.

Conditions in the shelters can be improved out of all recognition. Abundant and well-lighted sanitary facilities (it is incredible that darkened and obscure corners should so often be chosen for conveniences) should be available. Air conditioning plant should be installed wherever possible, and disinfection of the shelters is of course essential. It need be no more offensive than the spraying of cinemas and theatres. It should be the business of Lord Horder's Committee to recommend forms of apparatus and chemical solutions which best meet the particular type of shelters. Ready availability and reasonable cost are considerations which no doubt they will take into account. The introduction of season-tickets and a system of "regulars" in each shelter can simplify the handling of the problem because it should be possible, if necessary under compulsion since the need is so desperate, to have regular health-examinations as a condition of admission. The doctors should be empowered to inoculate against typhoid. The M.O.H. of Southampton has already started voluntary clinics throughout the city and has started inoculations. The response, he says, has been encouraging.

Allocated bunks will also help. They will have to be capable of dismantling and disinfestation and they must be arranged so that there is an approximation to the desirable 6 cubic-feet of air per person. In any event, the tiers of bunks should be so arranged that no head (and mouth and nose) should be directly above, or close to, another. In three-tier bunk arrangements the people in the second tier should lie the opposite way from those above and below—head to feet.

More difficult is this infernal problem of wet clothes. Bedding can be stacked (and regularly cleansed) at the shelters, but that does not get over the difficulty of people having to sleep in damp clothes. Drying rooms will somehow be necessary. Most of the London Boroughs have admirable wash-houses with well-equipped drying rooms and, if changing rooms were available, the clothes, carefully labelled, could be collected and dried overnight. I can foresee all the difficulties and most of the objections, but I put the suggestion forward because it is the best I can make in the perplexing circumstances. Otherwise, there may have to be issues of mackintoshes to the civilian population.

Before the war we had a fine "'Flu Squad" which, under the late

Sir Patrick Laidlaw, discovered the virus of influenza and was on the way to the perfection of a vaccine. The war and Laidlaw's death interrupted the work, but the Americans have pressed forward the experiments and have produced a vaccine which will be one of the U.S. war-contributions this winter. How effective the vaccine will be against mass-infection remains to be seen.

After all the precautions have been taken against cerebro-spinal meningitis, or spotted fever, and against pneumonia, there remains the "miracle drug" as the death-reducing treatment. It is one of the ironies of this era of madness that the drug owes its origin to Prontosil, the red aniline dye development, produced by the German chemists under Dagmak and Hoerlein, developed clinically by Dr. Leonard Colebrook at Queen Charlotte's Hospital (where it reduced the death-rate from the deadly child-bed fevers from 27 per cent. to under 2 per cent. in a year), and improved upon after 693 experiments by the chemists of May and Baker, the British drug-house. Scientists all over the world have worked on refinements of the properties and specific effects of the drugs. Internationalism in medicine has triumphed in this, the greatest therapeutic advance since Ehrlich discovered salvarsan.

Strictest precautions are also necessary, in the provision of sanitary arrangements, against risks of dysentery and venereal disease.

In the front line of all this must be feeding. Protective foods and the various vitamins are our buttress against the impact of infection. The addition of Vitamins A and D to margarine and of Vitamin B1 to bread are wise precautions. Vitamin C has still to be provided and it may be necessary to issue Vitamin C capsules to the public. This is necessary because as a nation we do not eat enough fresh fruit and vegetables (and anyway the prices are prohibitive to a large section of the community). Above all there must be an extension of communal feeding to ensure that everyone who needs it, whether homeless, gasless, wifeless or foodless, can have at least one square meal, and also breakfast, each day.

The facts have to be faced. The War Cabinet must see this not only as a social measure but as a first-class military issue. Pestilence has changed history and corrupted victories far more than any general. Remember how in the Vision of the Apocalypse, the livid rider rode in the tracks of Conquest, War and Famine.

RITCHIE CALDER

EQUALITY OF SACRIFICE

WHAT, we asked a fortnight ago, is happening to the host of shopkeepers who have either been driven from their shops by the evacuation of coastal areas, or bombed out of them? Certainly there exists no comprehensive or logical policy for the relief of these economic casualties. Very little is being done for them, but a number of things are being done on them. Some very interesting and disquieting developments are taking place in connection with this problem. For example, the coal mining industry is also subject to this kind of economic casualty. It has lost markets through enemy action: it may suffer physical damage by bombing. The coal owners have sought relief for these contingencies by what the *Times* calls a notable step in industrial self-government. They are creating a compensation fund by raising the price of coal to the consumer. We will examine this notable step in industrial self-government later, but meanwhile we may note that our ruined or bombed-out shopkeeper will pay out of his income, if he has any, a contribution for keeping coal owners' income and capital intact. The rise in the price of coal will increase the costs of the railways, and since the country is pledged to keep railway shareholders' incomes intact our shopkeeper, when he evacuates, will pay higher fares to provide this compensation fund. Similarly, if steel costs are adversely affected he will be mulcted if any of his demands require the use of steel. When he seeks new quarters away from the coast or bombed area he is liable to be charged fantastic prices for accommodation. True, the Minister of Health has declared that he will stamp out such profiteering, but when hotel and lodging-house keepers point out that they are only just compensating themselves for lost holiday and summer business, the Minister can only scratch his head and retire to discover that there is no legal, economic or other definition of profiteering through which the proverbial coach and horses cannot be driven.

There are thus two classes of wartime economic casualty, and the old distinction between sheltered and unsheltered trades takes on a grimmer and more sinister significance to-day. Some industries can pass their losses on to the rest of the community: the others carry their own losses and, in addition, provide the compensation funds for the first group. Much of this goes on behind the scenes unknown to or unrecognised by the public. Many of the controls carry a personnel whose peacetime occupations are gone and who are superfluous to the industry in wartime. When the Government becomes the sole purchaser of home cattle the function of live stock auctioneers disappears. It will be found that these gentlemen are being carried by the industry; that is to say, the price of meat contains a charge to maintain them regardless of the current value of their services. It is not easy to discover the facts, but it is pretty certain that the timber, metal, scrap and other industries are levying tolls on the community in this way in order to keep their peacetime merchanting departments in being. To the relief of all these "fortunate" casualties the ruined shopkeeper will contribute.

Where is the equality of sacrifice in all this? We have been assured over and over again that this time there must be equality of sacrifice. Does anyone know the meaning of this term? Has it any meaning in theory or practice? The President of the Trade Union Congress was eloquent in his opening demand that there should be equality of sacrifice and that none should make a profit out of the war. "Equality of sacrifice," "No profiteering," "Conscription of capital and labour"—there is a suspicion that Labour Ministers have been brought into the Government to propagate these slogans which have no meaning for policy, because no one has thought them out. The economists have been no help. Mr. Keynes and others have been very eloquent about what to do with incomes when they have emerged. They have said very little about the processes by which incomes disappear or are blown sky-high, and nothing about possible remedies or palliatives. We need political as well as pure economists. In the last war the flagrant inequality was between the service man and the civilian. That anomaly still persists but there are still more glaring anomalies between civilians. As things are developing there will be greater inequality of sacrifice on this occasion than on the last. Powerful interests are able with Government connivance to protect themselves against economic mishap: for others there are only sporadic, ill-conceived and inadequate measures of relief apparently grudgingly and tardily conceded by the Treasury. According to Mr. Churchill's figures the official expectation was that casualties from air raids would be more than twenty times greater than they have been to date. Using this multiplier we can only assume that the destruction of property and the number of homeless, including displaced or bombed shopkeepers, would have been twenty times as great. There seems to have been no conception of the appalling economic problem that would have been created. Judging by the preparations, the assumption was that people would either be in coffins or in hospitals. The notion that they would be wandering about homeless or without means of livelihood does not seem to have occurred to anybody. The lack of imagination at the Treasury is shown by its complacent acceptance of the Weir report on compensation and above all by its original attitude to the distressed coastal areas. When they asked for assistance, they were told not to come bothering until their rates had risen to the Merthyr Tydvil distress levels of peacetime. After that they would get permission to borrow. At the same time, as people were leaving the danger areas, the Government was giving the local public utilities power to raise their charges to remaining consumers, in order to make up the loss in turnover. The last shopkeeper to remain on the burning deck whence all but he had fled is still by official policy liable for the whole pre-war rate, gas, electricity and water bills of the borough. Now he has to salve the wounds of the coal industry. But if he sells a fourpenny torch battery for sixpence, coal owners, steel magnates, timber merchants and farmers unite in a demand for his summary execution.

There is another grave aspect of this problem. Not only ought people to be displaced from danger areas but they ought to be displaced from many non-essential occupations and industries. The curtailment of free purchasing power combined with more positive measures such as limitation of supplies automatically secures this, but how can one advocate more drastic and speedier methods of displacement if unrelieved hardship results? This week a well-known London store is advertising 295-guinea fur coats, and in competition with Sir Robert Kindersley describing them as a really fine investment. One could be eloquent or even blasphemous about this. But to advocate the requisitioning of such furs, their sale abroad and the prohibition of any future home trade in such luxuries may entail the reduction of a £1,000 a year buyer to penury. He or she may have a mortgaged home, life insurance commitments, children at school and other heavy obligations. Is there any official policy of relief equivalent to Government patronage of coal owners? Up the coal owners and down with fur-buyers is no programme for democracy. A less sympathetic case is that of horse-racing. We all see through the ballyhoo about the preservation of bloodstock and giving the boys on leave a treat, but that doesn't

dispose of the problem of the racehorse trainer, a quite worthy citizen with wife and children biologically indistinct from the spouses and offspring of coal-owners. If war is to be a permanent threat of our civilisation a man will be foolish to adopt any independent or small-scale occupation. Economic security will only be found in government service, in the public utilities and the big cartellised industries.

To return to the coal compensation scheme, the *Times* may regard it as a notable step, but it is mistaken in thinking there is anything novel about its operation. It is just the old-time exercise of monopoly power at the expense of the consumer. The *Times* naively argues that although the asset is in private ownership its trade use is a national gain in employment and exchange, and in the general welfare of the community. This almost implies that if the industry doubled the compensation levy it would do the rest of us twice the favour. But let us apply the principle generally. Let professional men combine to raise their charges to the public in order to compensate displaced architects and similar sufferers. Let landlords combine to raise rents in order to compensate the owners of empty houses. Let us solve our problem of the ruined or bombed-out shopkeepers by raising prices in other shops so as to cover the losses. What is the final result of this process? A rise in prices all round which in effect wipes out or nullifies the compensation funds. The coal scheme will succeed and can only succeed because less fortunate sections of the community cannot protect themselves in the same way. According to the *Economist* the Government regards the adoption of the coal compensation scheme as a matter of extreme urgency. It should do, since first come, first served and devil take the hindmost is the only basis for this method of compensation.

A LONDON DIARY

HERBERT MORRISON had to speak in the House of Commons as Minister of Home Security almost as soon as he knew he had the job. He was rightly cautious in his promises; it is better to perform more than you promise than to promise much and then let people down. But Mr. Morrison, himself an advocate of deep shelters in the past, made a mistake in attacking their present champions; dormitory shelters are now absolutely necessary, whatever the "political motives" of their advocates. He cannot quickly provide deep shelter for everyone, but he can do a good deal. He has already opened more tube space, and he and Ellen Wilkinson will also find, I believe, that they can scoop out large new "headings" from some existing Undergrounds. There are many technical difficulties of ventilation and so forth, but given the will, they should not prove insurmountable. I believe that the ticket system for bunks is absolutely necessary. It makes it easier to deal with problems of health and it does away with long queues, which are one of the most wretched and demoralising features of war, as the Germans found in 1918. It is shocking and pathetic to see quite early in the morning women and children lined up with their bedding for tube shelter at night. A large proportion of London's children are already away, but if I were Mr. Morrison I should begin by altogether evacuating some of the worst hit areas. Hostels, if necessary with charabancs to take people there, are the best solution for workers who cannot sleep near their premises; a staggered week with three days' work, sleeping in shelters on the premises, followed by days and nights at home is in many cases the only solution for the dark months ahead. Another necessity reported to me by everyone who works amongst the homeless, is that there must be somebody in the rest homes who can give information on behalf of the half-dozen bodies in charge of various kinds of relief. These include Public Assistance, the Assistance Board, Billeting and Evacuation, Compensation and Citizens' Advice. This last is especially important to those who want information about lost relatives. On the general question of health, on which Lord Horder's committee has recently reported, Ritchie Calder has plenty to say elsewhere. One of the necessities in communal shelters is more segregation. Expectant mothers, for instance, obviously should have a compartment to themselves. Everything should be done to encourage shelter entertainments. I want to rub in again the chance we have of taking over some large houses as boarding schools for the children of the poor. There should be no evacuation from one part of London to another, but in badly hit areas evacuation should be compulsory for many women and for all children between 5 and 14.

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I referred last week to letters I had received alleging that some conscientious objectors were being deliberately beaten up in order to break their spirit. Full details have now reached me and I gather that there are questions being asked in the House of Commons and that the War Office has already promised an inquiry. The worst story refers to a group of C.O.'s who obviously should never have been put into the Army. Apparently they were systematically beaten up, drenched with water and kicked about until some of them nominally gave in and allowed themselves to be drilled. One of them, who described this treatment, says that he gave in because he had become too weak and exhausted to resist, that he had passed out twice and had to be revived. A sergeant, who was an ex-professional boxer, was particularly skilful in breaking them in. He writes, "But what made me give in, perhaps more than anything else, was the colonel's promise that we should never get court-martial. Such treatment can be endured for a definite period, but where there is no end in sight the fight becomes hopeless." The letters describing this state of affairs at a Military Detention Camp near Liverpool, were written in pencil on odd pieces of paper. They sound completely sincere, and even if the effort to survive such treatment did not prove sincerity, the question would remain what possible justification on public grounds there can be for the use of systematic bullying and brutality as a means of obtaining soldiers. These allegations should be immediately investigated. Such things happened in the last war and we were promised that they should never happen again. They are in flat contradiction to the idealistic phrase about a democratic war for liberty, and they are, further, an example of dunder-headed stupidity. Men who have to be kicked into drill will never make good soldiers.

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Whom should I see at the door of the Chinese Embassy at the reception on Chinese Independence but Lord and Lady Simon! I did not know which to admire more—the generosity of the Chinese in inviting so inveterate a friend of Japan or the coolness of Lord Simon in accepting it. The truth is that China has suddenly become fashionable. Britain has so few allies left that a country of four hundred million people which has withstood all assaults for three years is no longer to be sneezed at. At length the Foreign Office has admitted that Japan cannot be appeased; Mr. Churchill speaks in the warmest terms about China; while the rumour that America may spare some aeroplanes to protect the Burma Road from Japanese bombers operating from Indo-China has been sufficiently strong to precipitate a violent bombardment on Kunming, the terminus of the Road and the junction of the Indo-China railway. Now that London itself is bombed we have more fellow-feeling with Chungking. An open city, with, at most, twenty-five fighting aeroplanes to protect it, the Japanese have bombed it continuously during the last two summers; they dropped eight hundred bombs on it only a few days ago. It could not have survived but for the astonishing character of the Chinese people and the fact that it has a large number of deep caves which act as excellent shelters. Now after three years of war in which Britain has done nothing to dissuade Japan, while America has supplied her with all the scrap-iron, oil and other materials of war that she wanted—after three years of war (to say nothing of the Manchurian war which began in 1931 while Sir John Simon was Foreign Secretary) the British Foreign Office have decided that in China we have "four hundred million allies, if we choose." I think the authorities were astonished at the outcry here when the Burma Road was closed, and I know that Mr. Churchill, Lord Halifax, Mr. Butler and some of the others who run our foreign policy were genuinely pleased, once they had got round to admitting that Japan was part of the Axis and that China was fighting, as they would put it, for the same cause as we are ourselves. But if our cause is really the liberation of peoples why not enlist the support of India too?

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Labour, the 3*d*. monthly described as the "official organ of the T.U.C. General Council" is a brightly edited little paper which contains this month an article from Sir Walter Citrine and a series of photographs illustrating "Britain's Might." Looking through its pages I was amazed at its lack of political consciousness and its complete insularity; not a sign appears anywhere that the British Labour movement has ever been affected by the great struggles and controversies of Continental Socialism. It is not that this paper rejects Marx, and Bakunin and Lenin; it is obviously written by people to whom these names and the century of international Socialist struggle just mean nothing at all. Most extraordinary of all is a review of Fröhlich's book on Rosa Luxemburg. It is unsigned, but that a reviewer should be found in a Labour paper who obviously hears of Rosa Luxemburg for the first time in 1940 is really odd. He remarks that her fate

> "was sealed when the Nazis came to power, but the circumstances of her death were in the last degree revolting to every decent instinct."

I read this passage three times before I could believe it. The official organ of the T.U.C. prints a review by someone who thinks that Rosa Luxemburg was killed by the Nazis after 1933.

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The late Earl Beatty did his duty gallantly in the last war: so did millions of other people. For doing his duty the Earl received a large special grant from the State at the end of the war. Part of the Earl's fortune was invested in American securities and he arranged for these to be transferred to Canadian companies in exchange for non-interest bearing redeemable debentures upon trust. By this piece of legal chicanery the moneys accruing to the Earl ostensibly became capital with no taint of income, and hence were not liable to income and sur-tax. On his death they accrued to his two sons, again in the same guise and outside the scope of the revenue authorities. Thus the family was in a position to avoid its due contribution to naval expenditure, war pensions, social services and other forms of state activity. Fortunately the Courts have cut through this legal chicanery and made the scheme liable to taxation. How much longer will wealthy people continue to practise this form of deception, to use a mild term for what is really bilking? If the revenue authorities cannot keep up with every dodge of shyster lawyers, the State can at least by publicity and other methods attach social stigma to such practices. Peerages are bestowed for social merit: the revoking of a peerage for anti-social conduct might eradicate tax avoidance from one branch of the Legislature.

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The weather won't always remain good. A doctor commenting on this to me the other day urged that A.R.P. and other workers must be provided with a change of uniform and one of thicker and warmer material than the light overalls that were provided for the summer. And an A.R.P. volunteer in the country (where they are still unpaid) told me that the Government must provide oil stoves. As it is men, and women in some services, are expected to work through cold nights, getting drenched to the skin when it's wet, without a fire to dry by or a dry garment to put on for the next night's work.

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My American mail brought me a bulky envelope containing a selection of the buttons worn by enthusiastic supporters of Roosevelt and Willkie. The two most formidable are the size of the pad on which you rest a glass of beer. A small collection of them would cover the most manly chest. One has a photograph of Roosevelt; the other says "Willkie or Bust." The captions on other smaller ones read: "Willkie 48, Roosevelt 0"; "If I were 21 I'd vote for Willkie"; "No Franklin the First"; "We don't want ELEANOR either"; "Roosevelt for ex-President"; and "Two Good Terms deserve another."

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Mrs. George, who "does for us" in the country, always has bad news. Someone is very ill or has lost an aunt or a leg; she had a row with her husband because he would turn over on the sofa and sleep through the bombs, though they made her so nervous dropping round that "she could not pick up a potato to peel it." Worse, onions are a shilling a pound and one of the evacuees certainly had erysipelas and we should get "covered with it all over our bodies." But then came the climax. "The Emperor and Empress of Eastchester," she said, referring to an East Anglian town, "have been killed by a bomb, wasn't it terrible?" "Emperor," I asked, "do you mean Bishop?" "No," she said, "someone bigger than that, it was. I believe it was the Emperor." Some hours later I heard on the wireless of the sad death of the Mayor and Mayoress of Eastchester.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Margaret Sampson.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," c/o The Cornwall Press, Paris Garden, Stamford Street, S.E.1.

We are not neutral by nature, as most other nations are. We have a sense of responsibility. Others of lesser breeds can be mere spectators. But not the British people.—*Efficiency Magazine.*

There is nothing wrong in dancing, but it is wrong on Sunday night. The fault in our country just now is the terrible lack of moral courage to stand out against the many evils of our social life.—Correspondent in *Glasgow Herald.*

A fine of £15,000 and £25 costs which had been imposed by Sir Robert Dummett at Bow Street Police Court was reduced to a fine of £500, and no order was made as to costs, by the London Sessions Appeals Committee yesterday. The applicant was Leon Pendeli Argenti, a company director, and he had been convicted of failing to offer two bars of gold and 400 sovereigns, valued together at £7,200, for sale to the Treasury.

Mr. L. A. Byrne, supporting the magistrate's decision, said that just before war broke out Argenti went to Belgium. He resigned from the directorship of an English company. He returned to this country on June 27th, and in subsequent correspondence disclosed that he had been in possession of the gold.

On behalf of Argenti, Sir Patrick Hastings, K.C., said that a most unfortunate miscarriage of justice had taken place, for which no one was to blame. Argenti's father was an Englishman, and the applicant was educated at Marlborough and Oxford.—*Times.*

In view of the importance of the "Save All" and "Don't Waste" campaign, it is hard to understand why the Salford Transport Committee will not allow any of its 1,300 employees to wear a coloured collar or tie.

This policy causes waste in respect of collars bought with the shirts. The money spent on white collars could be put to a better national use.—Letter in the *Daily Dispatch.*

Many reasons have been advanced for the various jolts and setbacks this country has sustained during the war. Here is one—from a newspaper letter—which hadn't occurred to us before:

"Nor has the nation yet repented of entering into war on a Sunday."—*Daily Dispatch.*

STATE CAPITALISM—THE COMING REVOLUTION

AM I socialist or capitalist? I know that I dislike both creeds as they are professed in our Mother of Parliaments. The one seems to stand for hypocrisy, the other for cynicism—both equally repellent. "Socialist, Individualist," meditated Mr. H. G. Wells in *The World of William Clissold,* "it is time we washed these old labels off our intellectual baggage. They are no longer of use to us and they may easily send our wills and intentions astray." Those are my feelings. In any case, the war presses on us grimly and there is no time to choose political labels. We have to organise victory, and in doing so we shall have to organise a new economic system, a new socialism or a new capitalism, willy nilly. You will see.

It is a pity that so many elderly people—not always of the capitalist classes—persist in regarding our workers as a legion of rats beside our select young heroes in sky-blue. But if the war is to be a long one, industrial morale is just as essential as fighting morale. Our fighting men know that they are helpless without an ever-increasing supply of machines to fight with and they look confidently to the army of workers to supply them. The bravery of the one is useless without the hard work and discipline of the other. In a three-to-four-year war industrial morale is probably the key to victory.

I am not decrying the value of professional brains or national leadership. As our inspiring Prime Minister has said, Hitler has sent the best brains of Jewry to help our own scientists beat the Germans, and I have a childlike faith that some of them will escape from concentration camps or prisons in time to invent a wonderful new machine which will give us the victory. The devout, I know, earnestly believe that God will save us through some miraculous intervention—it certainly will not be through our General Staff or our politicians—but I am still nervous lest God should protect only the meek and righteous. Now Hitler, who knows his mass psychology, is doing his best, by indiscriminate bombing of our industrial population, to make our workers revolutionary and unrighteous. Lack of sleep and nervous irritation, he knows, can make them hate their rulers as well as their enemy. That is his long-term plan for the defeat of Britain. He hopes, by systematic and sustained night bombing, to destroy the workers' morale to the point of a 50 per cent. loss in productivity.

It is not so easy to counter this attack. Wages for munition work are high, and if there is a weekly cash surplus, after the satisfaction of his wants, a worker will ask himself why he does not stay away for a day to make up for sleepless nights. After a narrow escape or two from bombs he may wonder why he is taking risks at all by working during air raids if he is really slaving for private profit. Private capital does not compensate him for injury or death from bombs. And he is getting worried about his wife and children in their surface shelters. It is all very well for Mr. Herbert Morrison to praise his courage and call him a front-line shock fighter in the war against Hitlerism, but the fact remains, he is not in uniform, he is not working for Government pay, and even if he is working for the national glory he is entirely without glamour and is just not regarded as a hero by anybody while he is drawing ten times more cash per week than a soldier. Months ago the Prime Minister promised that there would be conscription

of capital to match conscription of labour, but where is it to be found? The munitioneer can see no difference in the management or control of his factory. He sees the resident directors and the works managers improving their standard of living and adding to their luxuries at the expense of the Government's Excess Profits Tax. So the thoughtful workers begin to ask ugly and embarrassing questions, and if they remain unanswered industrial morale will surely begin to deteriorate and the output of vital war machines to decline.

How can the workers' confidence and good will be retained? Morale cannot be bought or coerced. It comes from a feeling of confidence in leadership, which, for a worker, means national or political leadership. Can they be assured that, when victory is won, peace will bring fair play to labour as well as to capital? Can they be guaranteed a better economic system which will eradicate the curse of unemployment? Can they be given the confidence that we are fighting this war not only for the political rights of the individual man against tyranny and dictatorship but for the economic rights of the working man, the right to work, the right to a minimum standard of living with free care for the aged and sick? If it is desirable that they should love their country, and endure the risks of death and mutilation like good soldiers, they must be persuaded that a new economic world, sane, just, efficient and fairly prosperous, will follow swiftly upon victory. But who can promise it? Whom can they believe and trust?

Certainly not the Conservative Party. Conservatives want no revolutionary change. Indeed, they want less Government interference with property and profit-making—a freer capitalism. They would like to see the capitalist system improved but no tampering with the privileges and power of money and of the ruling classes. It was a bad mistake for our Prime Minister to allow himself to be elected chairman of such a Party. And certainly not the Labour Party. They, too, want no revolutionary change; they merely want the succession to the privileges and power of rule. Indeed, they have an implied bargain with their Tory colleagues in the House of Commons—a mutual understanding that provided Trade Unionist officials can negotiate rises in wages to meet rises in wartime costs, and so maintain their jobs and usefulness to their men, there will be no major attack upon the capitalist system from the Labour Party. That, as I see it, is the implication of the political truce which reigns so beatifically in the House of Commons in the name of national unity for war.

But the workers are not fools. Nor are the shop stewards. They know that a wartime rise in wages, with no change in the economic system, is the prelude to inflation and a peacetime slump in employment. Does the Labour Party offer any promise of more stable employment? It will certainly try to improve and reform the existing economic order. It declares that it will nationalise the banks, the railways and bus companies, electricity, gas, water, coal, agriculture, and reorganise iron and steel, textiles, shipbuilding, engineering, and so on. But does it give any guarantee that the economic system will work any better for these reforms, that slumps will be avoided, that industries will be managed more efficiently when Trade Union representatives sit on their boards, that economies of operation will be secured by multiplying the hordes of minor Trade Union officials? I am afraid that the Labour world, with its socialised industries existing side by side with privately owned enterprise, will work even less efficiently than the capitalist system to-day, that there will be more jobbery and place-hunting, more waste and muddle, and that the endless boards and committees, with their luxury Trade Unionist bosses as chairmen, will bring economic ruin upon this unhappy country.

No, the accredited representatives of Labour do not really want a new order or a new society. They want the prizes of the old. They are terrified of any revolutionary change which would deprive them of their jobs, perhaps land them in concentration camps, and let in their hated Communist rivals. They are, therefore, content to be the new Liberals, the new radical reformers of our time. They may terrify conservative old ladies but they will not spoil the political fun. They are waiting for the succession to political power with a Trade Unionist in the Prime Minister's seat and all their hosts of officials stepping up into the places of authority and privilege immediately above them to-day. It pays them to play a waiting game.

But the workers, listening to fiery shop stewards, will not wait. The patriotic, uplift speeches which the Labour leaders pour out at week-ends leave them unmoved. They want the promise of a better world, here and now. If they are to work like hell and live dangerously for the next three years they will want something definite to look forward to. Deeds, not words, are called for. It is my conviction that if we wish to maintain industrial morale up to victory pitch we must make revolutionary changes in our economic system at once. We must fire the workers' enthusiasm with a plan. We must show them that we mean business. We must have a plan which will not only improve our war-making efficiency but give the workers a sense of power.

Here I claim, as modestly as I can, that I have a better plan to offer than my intellectual friends of the Left. I have this advantage over them that I have a working knowledge of the capitalist system from the inside. I know, from a business point of view, what works and what won't. Perhaps I should explain that, having refused to return to Oxford for an academic career, I went into business, first into that exciting bandit world of international oil, and then in the cloistered walks of the City—the strangely unrealistic, top-hatted world of stocks and shares, banking and finance. A few directorships have given me experience also of many curious sides of business life. I am familiar with the ways of entrepreneurs, film producers, manufacturers, merchants, bankers, financiers, stockbrokers and professional investors. In the happy days when the City was alive I used to make some money on the Stock Exchange whenever it was possible to make it, which meant, of course, exploiting the follies of other investors more greedy than myself. This was, I admit, cynical, but I studied also the "science" (sic) of investment, and disposed of hundreds of thousands of pounds for rich people on the most enlightened views of our industrial future. I do not know of any profession more soul-destroying than that of handling money for ungrateful and unimaginative capitalists. To maintain my sense of humour I have been forced to indulge even in financial journalism, which my business colleagues regard as my besetting sin. For that end I made a study of all the financial scandals of our time and soon became aware that the most unblushing crooks do not always end in Wormwood Scrubbs. I have seen the fearful risks which capital must sometimes take and the fantastic rewards it can sometimes earn. I have watched wild excesses in the capital issue market which have put huge undeserved fortunes into the pockets of ignorant and greedy financiers, contemptuous of the economic well-being of their country. I have known company promotions which have tricked thousands of innocent small investors, and I can point to-day to dozens of respectable big companies which keep their shareholders in shameful ignorance of their company affairs through an obscurantist system of accounts.

But the majority of capitalists are not wicked. They are merely ignorant, stupid and muddled. They are groping about in an economic and political system they do not understand; they are reaching after profits which the powers of Government are continually snatching away. They are playing with a currency they cannot control —like gamblers in a casino without croupiers to rake up the chips. My Wellsian friend, William Clissold, summed up the City so accurately with these words: "The men who rush about its narrow ways do not know what they are up to . . . they are ignorant of fundamentals. . . . The sense of being a possible part of one complete social organisation is not given to them. . . . Their great enterprises, their debts, their loans, their technicalities and methods, are solemn, vast puerilities." How many times have I been tempted by these disrespectful thoughts as I made my top-hatted calls in the City! May I be forgiven if I feel I understand the capitalist system better than the donnish highbrow lecturers of the Left, who write about it so destructively and viciously? I do not believe that they have ever really understood what is wrong with it or that they have anything more practicable to put in its place. I do not believe that they have even made up their minds whether, if they had the power, they would introduce Communism or adopt the Labour Party's plan of driving a reformed capitalist horse in harness with an overgrown Socialist mule. For a time the New Fabian intellectuals breathed Communist fire and stood by the Karl Marxian axiom that you cannot *reform* capitalism. But to-day Karl Marx is at least *démodé*, and the wicked uncle Stalin has given a distressingly bad smell to anything which savours of Russian Communism. Where stands our brain trust now? If they are not prepared to come down from their intellectual cloud and either preach unashamedly the doctrine of Communism or graciously accept my alternative, they should really hold their peace.

So I come to my revolutionary plan—a reply to the destructive fulminations of the intellectuals of the Left and an appeal to the constructive idealism and enthusiasm of the workers. For want of a better word I call it State Capitalism. I propose that Parliament should pass a law vesting the ownership of all capital in the State—land, buildings, plant, equipment, tools, cash, in other words, all fixed and working capital—and declaring that what capital the State cannot efficiently or practically use and exploit itself, it will lease to private individuals to use and exploit "on terms" and on a royalty basis. How this simple but far-reaching plan would work out in detail I will describe in my next article. It is, I believe, a revolution which will actually work.

NICHOLAS DAVENPORT

(To be concluded.)

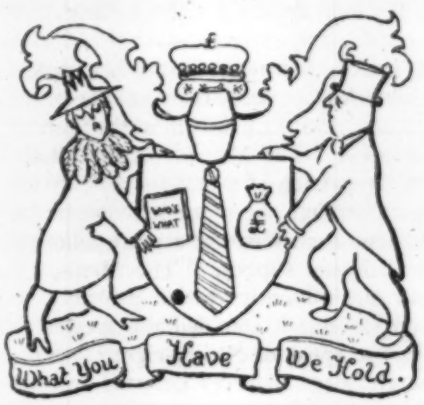
RECITATIVE

WHEN in this time of indubitable National emergency
The Government is faced with problems of equal magnitude and urgency,
When the *soi-disant* Ministry of Home Security, (of which it can give not the slightest assurance),
Exhorts the bombarded populace to further miracles of fortitude and endurance
Because the War Office, despite the allocation of incalculable millions
Fails to prevent the brunt of enemy action falling exclusively upon civilians,
When the numerous Departments of Circumlocution with incomparable agility
Evade the assumption of joint, mutual or individual responsibility,
While doing more to retard the country's War Effort in export trade production
Than a month of intensive air raids despite their widely advertised mass destruction,
And when we see how officialdom in the name of national safety can with complete impunity
Harass, badger, hamstring and paralyse the productive half of the community,
We realise that not only the countries roughly classified and thoroughly detested as autarchical,
But also our own, immemorially extolled as a Constitutionally monarchical
Universally enfranchised and politically educated Parliamentary Democracy
May be likewise the helpless victim of a flatulent, piddling, arbitrary obstructionist and imbecile Bureaucracy.

SAGITTARIUS

THE RITZKRIEG PAPERS—III

A Heraldic Correspondent writes: The interesting coat of arms of the Old Guard will present no difficulties to experts, antiquarians, the Star-and-Garter Herald, the Editor of *The Daily Heraldry* and *Debrett*, etc. For the general public, however, some explanation may be deemed necessary.



THE OLD GUARD RAMPANT

Note that the Lord and Lady are acting as Supporters of the ancien régime, represented on the scutcheon by a Book proper (very proper) on the dexter or distaff side, parted per pale by a Kerchief or Tie bendy (denoting a field—probably a playing-field—divided diagonally into several bends) and, most appropriately placed in the position of sinister chief, is a Bag or Wallet Or (gold Ore, presumably). A curious feature is the placing of a Flask or "Cocktail-Shaker" Argent in place of the traditional Helmet or Helm. This is perhaps a playful way of representing "Pleasure at the helm." The Lady is habited with a Fur Sable and a Coat d'Azure. The motto, "What You Have We Hold" is a very old one, dating back for centuries.*

The Aristocats

There may be some who believe that the female of the species is more deadly dull than the male. When they consider the activities of the Aristocats of the Ritzkrieg, they will revise their opinions. These nobly born and gently nurtured ladies were not by any means idle in the early months of the war.

Consider the case of Lady Standaghast. For years of her life, in her county home, High Dudgeon, she aspired to be a power in power politics, and to influence the course of history by casting her spell over the politicians who thronged her home at week-ends. In the words of a well-known wit, she became the *femme futile* of British politics. But when war came—and the politicians went—did Lady Standaghast go into retirement like any other ex-Minister?

Not at first. She became the Best People's Champion against the infamous invasion of evacuees, known by her as the Bratskrieg. Her letters reveal unforgettably the sufferings of the County at the hands of little children. "The sooner we have birth control the better," she remarked when she saw paper bags and orange peel on the lawns.

In a recent letter, written from her cousin's home at Newport, Long Island, where the Standaghasts took up residence for business reasons, Her Ladyship uttered a fresh complaint. This time it concerned her town house, Upper Ten, Portwine Square, which was also appropriated by the authorities for the purpose of housing more refugees—this time from what the same authorities officially described as "the Depressed and Devasted Areas."

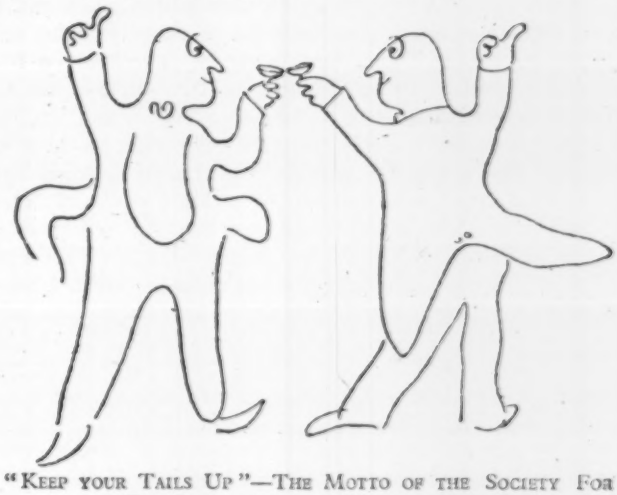
Now consider the case of Katherine Countess of Kensington—better known as "Kitty," a gossip-writer and "Soft Corner" correspondent of "Home Kat." She contributes a valuable chapter on "Careers for Our Gairls," of which the following passage is a sample:

> Wartime is a time when we must look more than ever to the future of Our Gairls. Some of us may be lucky, and find that all our gairls have made good matches, in which case we can sit back and *cultiver notre jardin*. But if not, we must decide now whether to strike a match for her—even if it's only a safety match—or whether to find her a suitable post. And though all the nice gairls love an officer, just bravery alone won't build a house for your little daughter to be comfortable in and for you to be comfortable in yourself if something Goes Wrong In The City. Let's face it. Often a business man in a Preserved Occupation is a safer son-in-law than a madcap D.S.O. But maybe marriage is a mirage, as Kitty so often tells her friends who write to her at "Home Kat" (Box 187, Department B, if ever you're in trouble.) In that case, *get your gairl into uniform*, and maybe the process will be reversed and a rich and patriotic business man will fall for the Girl in Khaki. . . .

"GET YOUR GAIRL INTO UNIFORM . . ."

To show what adventures befall the ex-deb looking for war work, *The Ritzkrieg Papers* present the example of Lucy Rolls-Voyce, third daughter of Lord Damson. "I've been everything since the war started," she writes impulsively, "absolutely *everything!*" Her success she attributes to "sheer stockings and sheer personality." She describes her career in an Intelligence Department (probably the Department of Military Significance) running errands for her boy-friends, "Puffy" Powter-Pidgin, "Barker" Brigstocke and "Chummy" Chumley, and taking part in the fast and loose game of "Who's Whose." Then her girl-friend, Molly Coddle, gets her an announcing job at Breadcasting House, where a Selection Committee tells her she has a voice like a babbling brook in the midst of a leafy glen. From that she proceeds to the A.F.S., thence to the W.V.S. ("I thought all the cats in England had been destroyed till I went there," she comments tartly) and finally, through the kind and palatial offices of Colonel Bogus, who knows her father, she becomes a confidential sexetary to a confidential man in a Confidential Ministry.

> That's how I did it. The Earl's Gairl made good. And when you're the third daughter of a title, you simply can't go wrong—or if you do, you go wrong in the right sort of way.



"KEEP YOUR TAILS UP"—THE MOTTO OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF EVENING DRESS

MICHAEL BARSLEY

* *Erratum:* The blot on the scutcheon is a printer's error.

SOMETHING ELSE

THE other day I heard the editor of a paper asking a journalist for an article on some subject that had nothing to do with the war. "People like to think of something else," he said. The truth is, of course, not only that people like to think of something else now and then, but that they cannot help thinking of something else. A man would be inhuman to the point of idiocy who refused to take any interest in the war at all; but scarcely less inhuman would be the man who could think of nothing but the war. Try the ordinary man at breakfast by putting no mustard on the table for his bacon, and you will see how his mind switches off to the subject of mustard. During the egg shortage, too, his mind naturally turns to thoughts of eggs, and he discusses with himself in the secret places of his heart whether tomatoes are an adequate substitute. If he is intelligent he decides that they are.

So long as men eat and drink, they will find it difficult, even in the midst of great crises, not occasionally to think of something else. Most of us think in brief spasms and are easily distracted from great matters. So strong-minded a Christian as Donne complained that sometimes in the act of praying he found himself distracted by the buzzing of a fly. It may be a small annoyance or a lovely vision: we are equally diverted from the main line of our thought. Even when flights of aeroplanes are passing high overhead, looking in the sun like clouds of insects with transparent wings, the eye turns with pleasure to the spectacle of forty or fifty urchins playing football without rules on the common, running hither and thither in jackets, shirts and pullovers of divers colours, little animals bright with energy and happiness. That, seen against a background of autumn woods and the waves of the hills beyond them is as pretty and as distracting a sight in time of war as in time of peace. Perhaps even more so.

For great numbers of people, indeed, life even under a menace has its pleasant as well as unpleasant surprises. Attempt to amuse a three-months-old baby just now and you may get one of either of these. What a blow if it howls: how flattering if it smiles—even chuckles—from its cot! And, even if the baby has howled, you can go outside and forget your failure at sight of two swallows perched uneasily on a telephone wire after you thought that the swallows had gone for good till the coming of another spring. A moment later they are flying high and low over the pond in a dance that always suggests happiness, if it is only the happiness of greed. You turn your eyes and you see a Red Admiral butterfly opening and shutting its wings on the bare stem of a creeper, bathing in the late warmth of St. Luke's Summer. The very name of the butterfly gives pleasure as does the name of the Hunter's Moon that has been shining this week.

And not only do the face of nature and living creatures continue repeatedly to distract the mind from other things in the autumn of 1940. A fine blue October day stirs the memory of other fine blue October days and sends it out of 1940 to St. Ives and Florence in less harassed years. I once knew a poet who, being rheumatic, altered a famous line of Keats to: "Season of mists and general beastliness"; and it may be that this is a sound prosaic description of most autumns. But when fine weather fills the eye, fine weather also fills the memory. Sea and harbour, fishing smacks and gulls, river and hills and cypresses—they seem in retrospect to be alight with static sunshine, unchanging forever like the lovers on the Grecian urn.

While memory persists, we are under compulsion again and again to think of something else. On Saturday or Sunday night, while a Rhone of raiders was hurrying through the sky overhead on its way to London, I happened to be listening to the wireless and Count John McCormack began to sing "Where'er You Walk." That in itself was enough to take the mind into the permanent world of lovely things. There may be songs as lovely as this, but surely none lovelier. Then came other songs, among them "The Maid of County Down," arranged by Herbert Hughes, prefaced by a generous sentence on the loss that Irish music had suffered by Hughes' death. That sent my memory down the lanes of the past to the point at which I first met Herbert Hughes and was greeted with his Puckish smile. He had two passionate faiths—one in music and the other that his father was the handsomest man on earth. He had been lucky enough in infancy and childhood to have a nurse in County Down who seemed to be the sole repository of many songs that the rest of the county had long forgotten. In later life he published these songs and many more that he had collected from old pipers and ballad-singers. So many beautiful songs did he discover, indeed, that I once accused him of inventing folk-songs and attributing them to his nurse and other people. When I knew him first, he once said to me with a laugh: "If I wasn't so lazy, I'd be a genius." He underestimated himself, however; his books of Irish songs show him to have been a genius without whom Ireland—and, indeed, the world—would have been a poorer place.

Then I remembered that it was through politics that I first met him, though he was the least political-minded of men. In those days, however, it was not an unusual thing for anyone who cared for new movements in poetry, music and drama to find that the arts and politics were next-door neighbours and to awake one morning to discover that by some mysterious process he had become an ardent politician. Thus, when I met Herbert Hughes first he was organising a London branch of a Republican body, with its headquarters in Belfast, known as the Dungannon Club. We had the great pleasure of being denounced in a *Times* leader as not only seditious but dangerous.

One of our enterprises was entitled the Davis Press Agency. We had been told that Ireland was surrounded by a paper wall on the outside of which England wrote calumnies about the Irish people for the nations of the world to read. We determined to break down that wall. Hence, we sat down and wrote the truth about Ireland and had it translated into three languages and posted to the press of France, Germany and Italy. The translator into French is now a judge; the translator into German was a girl who, I am afraid, is now all but a Tory; I used to take the article round to be translated into Italian to an ice-cream shop near King's Cross above which the famous anarchist Malatesta lived, for he was a friend of one of the elders of our committee and had promised to help us.

As a result of all our energies, I think we once got five lines into a not very important paper in a French provincial town. Yet the *Times*, to our joy, denounced us as sinister. That alone compensated us for the melancholy of failure. I remember how, on the day on which the *Times* leader appeared, I was lunching at Mrs. J. R. Green's, where Mr. Humphrey Ward, who wrote leaders for the *Times* was the only Englishman present. How sweet it was to think that he had written the leader himself and that, without knowing it, he was lunching in friendly fashion with the demons, however ineffectual demons, whom he had been warning England against in the morning paper! The situation was so, let us say, piquant that I am afraid we laughed immoderately at jokes that deserved only a smile. At least, Mrs. Green did.

Then, as John McCormack ended, I remembered other things. I remembered a youth called John McCormack, then unknown and possibly not out of his teens, coming on to the platform in the Queen's Hall and singing to a half-filled house "The Memory of the Dead" in a way that seemed to express the passion of a race for a never-lost cause that had set but to rise again through the centuries. Never did any voice but Sarah Bernhardt's send such waves of rapture following each other through my being. I do not suppose "The Memory of the Dead" is great poetry, and musical critics would probably not admit it among the greatest songs. But it sounded the greatest of all songs that night. "Who fears to speak of Ninety-eight?"—sung by that stripling it became the challenge of every defeated, yet undefeated, people:

They rose in dark and evil days
To free their native land.
They kindled there a living blaze
Which nothing shall withstand.
Alas, that might should conquer right
They fell and passed away.
But true men like you, men,
Are plenty here to-day.
Then here's their memory; may it be
For us a guiding light,
To cheer our strife for liberty
And teach us to unite.
Through good or ill, be Ireland's still,
Though sad as theirs your fate;
And true men be you, men,
Like the men of Ninety-eight.

No, not great poetry, but turned into a great song by a great singer. To-day there must be such songs sung in secret in Poland, in Bohemia, in Norway, in Holland, in Belgium—in all the defeated, yet undefeated, countries. . . .

That, however, is getting away from the something else about which people are said to like to think. Let us, then, return to the fine weather. I saw two countrymen meeting on the road the other day, one of them stooping under a heavy sack he was carrying. The other greeted him with: "That's a lovely day." The man carrying the sack replied: "It's a treat of a day." An air-raid alert had just

sounded but he cared neither for that nor for the burden on his old shoulders. The sky was blue, and that best of all stars, the sun, was shining; so he had something else to think about and was thinking about it. Y. Y.

THE MOVIES

"Foreign Correspondent," at the Gaumont
"Saturday's Children," at Warner's
"Under Your Hat," at the Leicester Square
"New Moon," at the Regal
"London Can Take It"

Several times in the last few weeks I have recommended English films with the proviso that, of course, they weren't quite Hitchcock. *The Girl in the News* and *Saloon Bar* were spruce and lively offshoots of *Murder*, the parent plant of so many English growths; and *The Last Train to Munich* seemed to warm at moments with the knowledge that the master's *Foreign Correspondent* was well on the way. With the *panache* of Hollywood he should be King Hitchcock or Crippen Z. Hitchcock at the least. What does he read, this best director of ours, who likes to stalk plumply across a corner of his own films? Notable British Trials, I should say, for one thing; and *Foreign Correspondent* suggests a past of Oppenheim at least as much as Knickerbocker. Literachoor, at any rate, hasn't got hold of him this time; if one were to write down the story of his new film it would out-twirl the fanciest feuilleton. An American foreign correspondent comes to London on the eve of war and attends a peace luncheon. There he meets a pacifist statesman of vague nationality but tremendous importance, and falls in love with his daughter. War; and the statesman has two secret clauses of a treaty locked in his head, the revelation of which would be important to the enemy. He is murdered on the steps of a public building in Amsterdam. Or rather it turns out to have been a double who was murdered, while the real man has been taken away to a windmill to be subjected to third degree, and the foreign correspondent and the daughter get on his track—the daughter's father being a high official in the peace organisation but also the head of the ring of spies who are holding the statesman—No, it's no good, one can no more translate *Foreign Correspondent* into print than one can reduce Stravinsky to a programme note. Its tension is the tension of the eye; a Hitchcock thrill must be seen to be believed. And one after another the thrills in *Foreign Correspondent* are massive and photogenic to a degree. The assassination in Amsterdam: it is raining, the statesman walks from his taxi up the steps, hat in hand, and turns round to face the photographer, who fires point-blank and disappears among the umbrellas of the crowd. A car chase follows, and this oldest of devices for stimulating heart-beats excites us as though we had come upon such things for the first time in our lives. And at the end of the film, when an air liner is shot down into the sea, every phase of the crash, with the plane losing height and the passengers shaken about like dice, is magnificently—and how slowly, it seems!—unrolled. How does Hitchcock manage it—manage, I mean, in something more than the sense of getting his scenes pat? Well, he has a flow. Incidents swell and grow out of one another, a louring sky or an empty road develops vistas of suspense, a shot of a man climbing stairs is so angled that we feel the physical effort, characters bloom gaily under the lens like paper-flowers dropped into a glass of water, and the exuberance and sense of menace that drive Hitchcock to film-making find expression in a beautifully keyed photography. Several well-known actors in *Foreign Correspondent*—Joel McCrea, Robert Benchley, Loraine Day, Herbert Marshall, and Edmund Gwenn—seem delightedly to come into their own. It was a stroke of genius to give a sinister slant to the Marshall charm. Altogether, *Foreign Correspondent* succeeds in linking the thriller to the state of Europe, and comes off as emphatically as *Rebecca*, in my opinion, did not.

Saturday's Children I venture to recommend in the same breath with the great Hitchcock. This film is a delightful surprise, for it gives us one of those rare glimpses into a real America which Hollywood, going back on its tracks, has occasionally vouchsafed in pictures like *Primrose Path*. The danger—Hollywood being what it is—is that the director, abashed by the naturalness of his material, may end by drenching it in sentiment. *Saturday's Children* has its sentimental moments, but considering the temptations of the theme—how young love can be blighted by unpaid bills—the director, Vincent Sherman, has kept his head well. John Garfield and Anne Shirley provide the most delightfully natural pair of lovers I have seen on a screen since Clair in his Tobisfilm days. They work in the same office and their courtship takes place in odd moments when they are waiting for buses, lingering at night on doorsteps and paying a weekly visit to a bowling club. They marry on next to nothing and live in an apartment over a garage which rattles every time a lorry goes in or out. One of them wakes abruptly in the morning to see the bed-table slowly shivering its way across the floor. "Now I know," says the infuriated owner, "why this is the cheapest apartment in New York." The discomforts of having to decide whether you will have a sweet at lunch or a packet of cigarettes in the evening, of being hard up and in love, of enjoying street lights and lounging and grumbling, of having a good time despite the instalment plan, are gaily and touchingly conveyed. Exiguous circumstances are matched by economy of style: all the talent of the director, Vincent Sherman, has been concentrated on making his actors act well and on the cross-talk, which is admirable. I have rarely heard the struggling American middle class talk so naturally and so well as they do in the parlours and narrow apartments in this film. Nearly all good films in the end are those that do without stars, and the unobtrusive excellence of this one can be judged from the fact that that admirable actor, Claude Rains, who plays here a father-in-law, finds himself in company as good as his own. Even the smallest part is made to respond. *Saturday's Children*—rare admission!—is a film I mean to see again.

Of the week's musical comedies I very much preferred *Under Your Hat* to *New Moon*. There is rather a lot of chin and chin-chin about Mr. Hulbert, but if you can sit out a stage-show transferred to the screen, *Under Your Hat* bristles with quick-change amusement. And, of course, there is Cicely Courtneidge, with her mastery of the phonetics of South Kensington, appearing in all guises from French maid to Anglo-Indian colonel's lady. *New Moon* is for those who cannot resist Jeanette MacDonald. She and Nelson Eddy sing at one another like hungry lions and then fall to, to scratch and kiss. I found these orgies rather repellent.

The Ministry of Information have produced a number of good films recently and their latest, *London Can Take It*, is excellent. It was a good idea to get an American reporter to speak the commentary for this film of a typical London blitz night: streets at dusk, sirens, throbbing engines, batteries in action, bombs falling, the A.F.S. at work, shots of people in shelters and the underground. The photography has been kept actual and undramatic. And the tone of the American reporter, neither Garvinian nor replete with pep, puts some of our own commentators to shame.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

TWO POEMS BY W. R. RODGERS

SUMMER DAY

But, heedful of the man who walks alone
On the dunes now at noon, in the heat here
At the sightless bottom of a sand-dip
Two lovers hesitate, stop, looking up
At the single eye of sky vacantly
Accusing them, at the stiffened lashes
Of grasses circling it. But nothing moves.
And they again resume their easy grooves.

THE RAIDER

There, wrapped in his own roars, the lone airman
Swims like a mote through the thousands of eyes
That look up at him ironing-out the skies,
Frocked and fanged with fire, by nagging fingers
Of guns jagged and jogged, with shell-bursts tasselled.

Does ever the airman's eye, speeding on
To grim conclusion, alight and loiter
Curiously on the country below?
Or does his gaze easily dissolve
Upon the moving surfaces, and flow
Evenly away like rain on rivers?

Or, roaring back over our armoured rims,
Does his view take in only the bloom and boom
Of bomb beneath him, noting how neatly
It mopped up a map-point town or snouted out
This tip or else that tap-root of resistance?

Yet, pity him too, that navigator
Who now in archipelago of steel
Nears that place where hooked upon barbed air he'll
Halt, hang hump-backed, and look into his crater.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Lunchtime Shakespeare, at the Strand

Informality is the key-note of Donald Wolfit's presentation of excerpts from Shakespeare. Like the lunchtime Ballet, it offers all those who can escape for an hour from their work, a pleasant interval in which to hear again those lines which the Blitz has driven from the stage. Because it is informal, no efforts have been made to produce a finished or stylised presentation. To begin with, time is short, and it is not meant for those who are only content with the perfect. Scenery is of the barest, a back cloth and the simplest of lighting substitute. But this nakedness does not minimise the beauty of the verse, and the skill with which it is spoken. For it is with the verse that Mr. Wolfit has concerned himself, and he is to be congratulated on realising the limits of a production of this kind, and on confining himself to something that can be perfected. He is supported by John Wyse and Catherine Nesbitt, who gives a lively interpretation of Katharina, and Mr. Wolfit enjoys taming her. As a pleasant interlude, Elizabethan songs are sung by Frank Drew, and some of the sonnets are read by Hubert Langley. The effect of a song and a sonnet in alternation, is charming—as if two artists were showing each other their skill. In future performances, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Twelfth Night* are to be drawn upon, and it is to be hoped that an effort of this nature, and at this time, will not pass unappreciated.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, October 19th—

Fabian Society Lecture, Herbert Read: "Culture and Liberty," Central Hall, S.W.1, 2.15.

Opening of Toynbee Hall (28 Commercial Street) Week-end Classes. To be held Saturday, 2–4.30, and Sunday, 10–4.30.

SUNDAY, October 20th—

J. McCabe: "Is the Dark Age Returning?" Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, October 21st—

Fabian International Affairs Group Snack Lunch Meeting, Elizabeth Denby: "Socialist Sweden's Housing and Town Planning—its lessons for the rebuilding of Britain," Trade Union Club, 12 Great Newport Street, 1.

WEDNESDAY, October 23rd—

Fabian Lunch. Speaker: The Rt. Hon. Ernest Bevin, Royal Hotel, Woburn Place, W.C.1, 12.45. Tickets 2*s.* 9*d.* from 11 Dartmouth Street, S.W.1.

La Musique Française au XVIIe siècle, Institut Français, 3.

Correspondence

WHAT DOES THIS GOVERNMENT MEAN?

SIR,—I was both encouraged and puzzled by your comment of last week regarding the initiative of Communists in organising petitions for better A.R.P. and your defence of this necessary movement against the police attempts at suppression. Encouraged to find that someone has learned the lessons of France, puzzled because you fail to carry your insight further. "Suppression fosters the belief that the war is being fought for the benefit of the well-to-do," you say. But the possibility that such a belief might be correct is not considered. An obvious question arises: Is not police action based on Government legislation: and, further: what is the purpose of such legislation?

For answer, it seemed to me, we need go no further than your article "What Does this Governmen Mean?" It expresses, as a whole, doubt about the integrity of "after-the-war" promises, admits in effect that the present-day speeches of co-opted Labour leaders do not essentially differ from those of Conservative statesmen, pictures the Conservative Party as the representative organ of the "property-owning class," and is weak only in two points; namely, when it attributes the deep-shelter deficiency to Sir John Anderson's "personal stubbornness" and in its implicit faith in Mr. Churchill. No one doubts that the Premier is "anti-Hitler." But what is he pro? May not "party wishes" be justified in relying on him to maintain the (to them) correct policy in respect of India and the Empire? Is there not a great gap between his declared preparation for the "sacrifice of vested interests" and the actual sacrifice being made? Granting the best intentions on his part, does not his position subject him to the control of that class: not only because he is "Party Leader," but also because Parliament has a Conservative majority? One man cannot do very much against those who control the State machine. Why, even the Ministry of Supply is, on the raw material side, in the hands of rings, as you state. In any case, may it not be taking too much for granted to suppose that a man who shared the responsibility for that British Army at Archangel has ability to see beyond the *status quo?*

In short, vested interests may be rabidly anti-Hitler, yet pro *status quo*. Which, to the majority of people is no comfort and a good reason why we should have some very, very "tangible social change."

GEO. FOX

[The exigencies of war may modify many opinions, weaken many vested interests and make possible the tangible social change. ED. *N. S. & N.*]

CAT AND MOUSE

SIR,—Mr. Rowbotham refers to the possible "cat and mouse" treatment of a conscientious objector who refused medical examination and was sentenced to a maximum period of six months imprisonment, during which time he is to be conducted, at regular intervals, before a Medical Board.

In this instance, however, the mouse is at least on terms with the right end of the cat. What of the cornered mouse on whom the cat spreads its back and falls into a bored sleep? There are now several C.O.'s serving indefinite sentences of imprisonment because of their refusal to be medically examined for the Army. Some of these men have been in prison since early July and have no prospect of release unless they forswear their principles.

Questions in Parliament and repeated approaches to the Ministry of Labour and Home Office have failed either to elucidate or rectify this extraordinary administration of the law, whereby a man is imprisoned because of an act he will not perform and is promised release only when he can overcome his scruples against performing it.

NANCY BROWNE,
Secretary,
Central Board for
Conscientious Objectors,
6 Endsleigh Street,
London, W.C.1.

THE LATIN CATHOLIC MYTH

SIR,—Many of us will be grateful for Mr. Horsfall Carter's exposure of the "Latin Catholic" myth. Too little has so far been said on the kinship of the Fascist and Roman Catholic outlooks, and on the part played by the Roman Catholic Church in bringing about the downfall of Democracy in Western Europe, and particularly in the French Empire. May I bear out Mr. Horsfall Carter's remarks on the anti-Republican and anti-British attitude of many practising French Catholics before the war from my own experience in Algeria, where I was engaged in archaeological research in 1938 and 1939? The high officials with whom I came in contact scarcely bothered to hide their feelings in this direction. Thus in Constantine, the capital of the département of Constantine, where there was a staunch Radical-Socialist Town Council, it was possible for the Church to organise (with official connivance) an anti-Republican demonstration "for the victims of the Revolution" on the same day as the celebration of the 150th anniversary of 1789. Referring to the Republican fête that evening, a high official of the musuem at Constantine turned to me and said, "There are many of us who have no use for the Revolution." In saying this he was simply following the lead of his colleagues in the Prefecture. By other "pratiquants" I was warned openly of the results, so far as England was concerned, of the triumph of "La France nationale." Rapprochement with Germany and alliance with Italy and Spain was openly spoken of. At the same time the clergy were not behindhand in fostering intolerance among their flock. The Bishop of Constantine related to me with some pride how he had prevented Catholic children mixing even to do their school P.T., with "les autres" as he put it.

I repeat these incidents, illustrative of the feelings of an influential section of the French-Algerian upper class, for what they are worth. What concerns us now, however, is the means of parrying the threat to ourselves in Africa and the Near East which the conception of Catholic-Mediterranean unity implies. Are there forces at work strong enough to counterbalance the Fascist-Catholic element at least in North Africa? In this connection it is well to remember that other movements besides Roman Catholicism have found their "font of baptism" in the waters of the Mediterranean. Research shows that Catholicism predominates in the Mediterranean basin where the land-owning villa-aristocracy and the Roman cities survived the Roman Empire. Elsewhere, as in North Africa, Egypt and Asia Minor where the Catholic landlords gave way before the smallholder in his self-supporting village. Catholicism died out never to return. Its conqueror, the Evangelical form of Christianity of Donatist North Africa, of Coptic Egypt or of Novationist Asia Minor was at one with the Mohammedanism which it in turn gave way to in its hatred of Rome.

The connection between religion and local culture is of some significance. The North African Berber to-day, though the tempo of his life is accelerated, still retains his peasant outlook, and structure of society, both of which we should recognise as fundamentally democratic. He has never responded to the Latin ideal—the towns of Constantine and Algiers remain to-day as much islands of Latin culture in a barbarian country as Timgad and Thereste were in the second century A.D. He fought against that culture under Jugurtha and Gildo in the Roman Empire, as he fought against it under Abd-el-Kader in 1871 and Abd-el-Krim fifty years later. The rejection of the Projet Violette through the agency of Rightist elements in Algeria has not endeared the new generation of educated North African to French rule. It is among these same Berbers that we shall find our surest support against Fascism, secular or religious, in the western Mediterranean basin. It must be our aim to fuse the liberal and the Berber oppositions in French North Africa into revolt against Vichy, for in a democratic Franco-Berber North Africa lies a sure bar to the fulfilment of the dreams of Catholic Imperialism.

W. H. C. FREND, D.Phil.
Authors' Club,
Whitehall Court, S.W.1.

THE COLLAPSE OF FRANCE

SIR,—My own experience bears our Mr. Werth's view that France would not have saved herself from defeat, even had she been given efficient generals. For twenty years, the French people had been brought up on internationalism, on spiritual as well as material disarmament; and one out of eight inhabitants was not French. The government persecution of the left wing leaders and the press campaign against refugees and other foreigners, which began shortly after the declaration of war, made it impossible to feel that the war was being fought for an international ideology. With neither nationalism nor internationalism, what then were the people fighting for? Nearly every day some journalist or politician tried to define war aims, but these articles were confused and contradictory and generally boiled down to a war "against aggression." Of this paradox, the French were frankly sceptical, and could not bring themselves to believe that they were justified in sacrificing their lives. They had done so in 1914, and where had it got them? This attitude probably explains the frequent arrests of French citizens for saying that Great Britain had coerced their government into the war.

Unlike Mr. Werth, I found cynicism, rather than despair or demoralisation. My hotel proprietress in Bordeaux failed to take the war entirely seriously even with the German army practically on her doorstep, although she then admitted that, as a joke, it had gone a little far. A Jewish friend (who recently returned from unoccupied France to his home in Paris) told me that he liked the English immensely, but that they must be a very stupid race, since they had legislation for conscientious objection and still chose to fight. The young wife of a don said (just before the armistice): "We are old, you see, so very old." The only real militant feeling I found among the shop and factory girls, in whom the emotional spirit of nationalism had still persisted.

The idea of continuing the war from Africa seemed to us all inconceivable—as unreasonable as expecting the Danes to have gone to Iceland to fight. Unlike

the British Empire, there was hardly any decentralisation and nearly all the armament factories were situated between Lyons and Paris. The general feeling was that the suggestion came only from the men who saw they would be left to hold the baby in the event of an armistice. DEREK NEAME

TIMES CHANGE

SIR,—

Times change, but change not Me: this word is true
While the world stands:
"He saved His own, Himself He cannot save":
The mansions that I build outlast the grave,
These being prepared for you.
I trust the House of God to human hands.

I fear this comes a little late to follow on your correspondent's verses about St. Paul's, but the copy containing them only came into my hands yesterday. DOROTHY L. SAYERS

SIR WALTER CITRINE'S TRIUMPH

SIR,—Was it yesterday that the T.U.C. was concerned about censorship and the possible gagging of the press by Mr. Duff Cooper?

Now we have the humiliating spectacle of the T.U.C. attempting to gag the *Daily Worker* by refusing it admission to Congress.

It now seems that the most reactionary newspapers receive the blessing of Sir Walter and his friends, while a working class publication is damned with bell, book and candle.

I have only to add that I am not a communist, and I at times am irritated as much by the *Daily Worker* as I am by the small-minded intolerance of Sir Walter Citrine. HARRY FOWLER

COMMUNIST POLICY

SIR,—Part of your reply to Commander Young's timely protest against your extraordinary statement about the Communist Party consists of criticism of the *Daily Worker* in its handling of the East End situation. But whatever strictures you have to pass on our reporting have obviously no connection with your allegation that the "Communist Party is much discredited," and it would surely be wiser to withdraw that quite unfounded observation rather than to tack on further remarks about the shortcomings of the *Daily Worker*. The staff of the paper would be the last to contend that the reporting of the East End bombings did not show weaknesses. It is a fact, however, that the reporting begun by Harry Pollitt and continued by Randall Swingler and Frank Pitcairn was not surpassed by any of the Fleet Street "stars" both as regards descriptive writing and the consistent bringing out of the urgent human problems that required immediate attention.

Like every other paper we presented our reports from a political angle and it is certainly true that, in part, our reports were a "thesis about society." We condemned the society which has brought this war on the people, refuses them bomb-proof shelters and then fails to succour the victims of this policy. Day by day we hammered home that A.R.P. is a class question and that the workers can obtain effective protection only by forcing their demands on the Government.

The other newspapers also inserted politics into their reports. They praised the endurance of the East End and exposed many shocking cases of bad treatment; but carefully refrained from publishing a single word against the class policy that had condemned the East End to these horrors. Even the newspapers (including the *Daily Herald*) that took up the demand for deep shelters, quickly dropped it when the screw was put on from Whitehall. The spotlight was turned on the "sufferings" of the West End, the bombings of Buckingham Palace and the long procession of distinguished visitors and special what-nots, who all promised that something would be done.

In contrast to the rest of the press, the *Daily Worker* not only exposed the urgent problems arising from the bombings; it also put forward practical proposals for immediate action. If our demands for the taking over of the West End mansions and country houses had been operated by the Government then the worst features of the treatment of the homeless and the evacuees would have been quickly overcome.

You rail against red tape and condemn the present chaos as an "administrative failure." All of this is true, but the setting up of new boards and the appointment of dictators is no solution. The policy of the ruling Tory clique must be changed, and that can only be done when the workers act in an organised and united way in order to force their will on the rulers.

That is the foundation stone of the policy of the *Daily Worker*. Let it be remembered that the only substantial improvement in protection achieved in these weeks—the occupation of the Tubes—came as a result of action by the people themselves.

And so, where are we now? The press has lost a great deal of its interest in the East End, and the Government has plucked up its courage to reaffirm its anti-deep shelter policy, and has given a Labour Leader the job of carrying on Anderson's policy. The problem of the East-Enders and of the people everywhere is still unsolved.

The *Daily Worker* has no desire to claim exclusive credit for the advocacy of deep and bomb-proof shelters. We can, however, give the assurance that with Professor Haldane as chairman of our editorial board the advocacy will be continued with consistency and vigour. WILLIAM RUST

Daily Worker.

SAFFRON

SIR,—Mrs. Sackville-West suggests in her country notes that saffron is prepared from meadow-saffron (*Colchicum autumnale*). Actually it is prepared from Saffron Crocus, a cultivated member of the Iris family, whereas the *Colchicum* belongs to the Lily family. It would be interesting to know which of these two the pilgrim brought from the East. If it was the *Colchicum* then no farmer should be grateful, for it renders many fields useless as pasture since the leaves, seed and corm are extremely poisonous to stock, both fresh and dried in hay.

MARY GOTT

A TAX ON HEALTH

SIR,—After reading and hearing so much about the "war effort" and about the duty of the citizen to keep fit the better to maintain this effort, it is a little surprising to learn of the Government's latest contribution to this end. We are informed that all medicines with a very few exceptions are to be covered by the purchase tax and will be 16⅔ per cent. dearer.

Amongst other drugs which are to be taxed are digitalis, which has been for so many years the chief stand-by in the treatment of heart failure; iron preparations for use in anaemia; liquid paraffin, bismuth and alkalies, all of which are usually employed for long periods of time and so form a permanent drain on the budget of the working-class household; opium and morphia for the relief of pain; stomach extract for the treatment of pernicious anaemia; all the vitamins which are so essential for the prevention of disease; cardiazol, sodium amytal and tryparsamide, drugs which have proved extraordinarily useful in the treatment of insanity; phenobarbitone, the most widely used drug for the prevention of epilepsy, and a host of other valuable substances.

This must mean that all those women and children who are excluded from the provisions of the National Health Insurance Scheme will find it still more difficult to pay for and consequently to obtain medical treatment. The deplorable tendency to neglect disease until it is intractable will become even more widespread. In thousands of families the new tax will mean a choice between extra pence spent on medicine and denial of other necessities or neglect of dangerous symptoms.

For hospitals the position is even more serious. In addition to extra expenditure on drugs they must face an extra charge of 33⅓ per cent. for such things as nitrous oxide, for diagnostic materials such as bismuth, uroselectom, etc., for X-ray plant, surgical instruments (with a few exceptions), theatre and ward equipment; laboratory apparatus and supplies, microscopes, balances, etc.; sheets, blankets, soap and other necessities which bulk so largely in the hospital budget. In the case of municipal hospitals an extra burden will be thrown on the long-suffering ratepayer and the voluntary hospitals will be brought a further stage towards bankruptcy.

Captain Cruickshank states that the provisions of the tax were the subject of "complete medical agreement." This statement is a slur on the whole profession. Every doctor who is interested in the welfare of his patients resents having his work hampered by the high cost of necessary drugs and feels that such elementary necessities should be available regardless of cost.

It may be remarked by way of a footnote that substances which when used for medicinal purposes are taxed are free of charge when used in the manufacture of paint or boot polish! Malt, which is classed as a food, is exempt, but cod liver oil is taxed because it is a medicine! If this tax had been introduced by enemy agents with the express purpose of sabotaging the health of the community it could hardly have been more effective!

St. Mary Cray, Kent. B. H. KIRMAN

Country Hospitality for Londoners

We have received a number of letters from country readers offering week-end hospitality for those who must work in London, or "duration" hospitality for their children. Such offers are, of course, intended for those without the means to make their own arrangements, and the Manager of this paper will put parties in touch if they will write to him c/o Cornwall Press, Paris Garden, Stamford Street, S.E.1, marking envelope "Evacuees."

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Current Literature

THE MAN AT THE GATE

[This is the first of two articles by Virginia Woolf on Coleridge. The second will be published next week.]

THE man was Coleridge as De Quincey saw him, standing in a gateway. For it is vain to put the single word Coleridge at the head of a page—Coleridge the innumerable, the mutable, the atmospheric; Coleridge who is part of Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley; of his age and of our own; Coleridge whose written words fill hundreds of pages and overflow innumerable margins; whose spoken words still reverberate, so that as we enter his radius he seems not a man, but a swarm, a cloud, a buzz of words, darting this way and that, clustering, quivering and hanging suspended. So little of this can be caught in any reader's net that it is well before we become dazed in the labyrinth of what we call Coleridge to have a clear picture before us—the picture of a man standing at a gate:

> . . . his person was broad and full, and tended even to corpulence, his complexion was fair . . . his eyes were large and soft in their expression; and it was from the peculiar appearance of haze or dreaminess which mixed with their light, that I recognised my object.

That was in 1807. Coleridge was already incapable of movement. The Kendal black drop had robbed him of his will. "You bid me rouse myself—go, bid a man paralytic in both arms rub them briskly together." The arms already hung flabby at his side; he was powerless to raise them. But the disease which paralysed his will left his mind unfettered. In proportion as he became incapable of action, he became capable of feeling. As he stood at the gate his vast expanse of being was a passive target for innumerable arrows, all of them sharp, many of them poisoned. To confess, to analyse, to describe was the only alleviation of his appalling torture—the prisoner's only means of escape.

Thus there shapes itself in the volumes of Coleridge's letters an immense mass of quivering matter, as if the swarm had attached itself to a bough and hung there pendant. Sentences roll like drops down a pane, drop collecting drop, but when they reach the bottom, the pane is smeared. A great novelist, Dickens for preference, could have formed out of this swarm and diffusion a prodigious, an immortal character. Dickens, could he have been induced to listen, would have noted—perhaps this:

> Deeply wounded by very disrespectful words used concerning me, and which struggling as I have been thro' life, and still maintaining a character and holding connections no way unworthy of my Family . . . .

Or again:

> The worst part of the charges were that I had been imprudent enough and in the second place gross and indelicate enough to send out a gentleman's servant in his own house to a public house for a bottle of brandy . . . .

Or again:

> What Joy would it not be to you or to me, Miss Betham! to meet a Milton in a future state . . . .

And again, on accepting a loan:

> I can barely collect myself sufficiently to convey to you—first, that I receive this proof of your filial kindness with feelings not unworthy of the same . . . but that, whenever (if ever) my circumstances shall improve, you must permit me to remind you that what was, and *forever* under *all* conditions of fortune will be, *felt* as a *gift*, has become a Loan—and lastly, that you must let me have you as a frequent friend on whose visits I may rely as often as convenience will permit you . . . .

The very voice (drastically cut short) of Micawber himself!

But there is a difference. For this Micawber knows that he is Micawber. He holds a looking-glass in his hand. He is a man of exaggerated self-consciousness, endowed with an astonishing power of self-analysis. Dickens would need to be doubled with Henry James, to be trebled with Proust, in order to convey the complexity and the conflict of a Pecksniff who despises his own hypocrisy, of a Micawber who is humiliated by his own humiliation. He is so made that he can hear the crepitation of a leaf, and yet remains obtuse to the claims of wife and child. An unopened letter brings great drops of sweat to his forehead; yet to lift a pen and answer it is beyond his power. The Dickens Coleridge and the Henry James Coleridge perpetually tear him asunder. The one sends out surreptiously to Mr. Dunn the chemist for another bottle of opium; and the other analyses the motives that have led to this hypocrisy into an infinity of fine shreds.

Thus often in reading the "gallop scrawl" of the letters from Highgate in 1820 we seem to be reading notes for a late work by Henry James. He is the forerunner of all who have tried to reveal the intricacies, to take the faintest creases of the human soul. The great sentences pocketed with parentheses, expanded with dash after dash, break their walls under the strain of including and qualifying and suggesting all that Coleridge feels, fears and glimpses. Often he is prolix to the verge of incoherence, and his meaning dwindles and fades to a wisp on the mind's horizon. Yet in our tongue-tied age there is a joy in this reckless abandonment to the glory of words. Cajoled, caressed, tossed up in handfuls, words yield those flashing phrases that hang like ripe fruit in the many-leaved tree of his immense volubility. "Brow-hanging, shoe-contemplative, *strange*": there is Hazlitt. Of Dr. Darwin: "He was like a pigeon picking up peas, and afterwards voiding them with excremental additions." Anything may tumble out of that great maw; the subtlest criticism, the wildest jest, the exact condition of his intestines. But he uses words most often to express the crepitations of his apprehensive susceptibility. They serve as a smoke-screen between him and the menace of the real world. The word screen trembles and shivers. What enemy is approaching? Nothing visible to the naked eye. And yet how he trembles and quivers! Hartley, "poor Hartley . . . in shrinking from the momentary pain of telling the plain truth, a truth not discreditable to him or to me, has several times inflicted an agitating pain and confusion"—by what breach of morality or dereliction of duty?—"by bringing up Mr. Bourton unexpectedly on Sundays with the intention of dining here." Is that all? Ah, but a diseased body feels the stab of anguish if only a corn is trod upon. Anguish shoots through every fibre of his being. Has he not himself often shrunk from the momentary pain of telling the plain truth? Why has he no home to offer his son, no table to which Hartley could bring his friends uninvited? Why does he live a stranger in the house of friends, and be (at present) unable to discharge his share of the housekeeping expenses? The old train of bitter thoughts is set in motion once more. He is one hum and vibration of painful emotion. And then, giving it all the slip, he takes refuge in thought and provides Hartley with "in short, the sum of all my reading and reflections on the vast Wheel of the Mythology of the earliest and purest Heathenism." Hartley must feed upon that and take a snack of cold meat and pickles at some inn.

Letter-writing was in its way a substitute for opium. In his letters he could persuade others to believe what he did not altogether believe himself—that he had actually written the folios, the quartos, the octavos that he had planned. Letters also relieved him of those perpetually pullulating ideas which, like Surinam toads as he said, were always giving birth to little toads that "grow quickly and draw off attention from the mother toad." In letters thoughts need not be brought to a conclusion. Somebody was always interrupting, and then he could throw down his pen and indulge in what was, after all, better than writing—the "insemination" of ideas without the intermediary of any gross impediment by word of mouth into the receptive, the acquiescent, the entirely passive ear, say, of Mr. Green who arrived punctually at three. Later, if it were Thursday, in came politicians, economists, musicians, business men, fine ladies, children—it mattered not who they were so long as he could talk and they would listen.

Two pious American editors have collected the comments of this various company*, and they are, of course, various. Yet it is the only way of getting at the truth—to have it broken into many splinters by many mirrors and so select. The truth about Coleridge the talker seems to have been that he rapt some listeners to the seventh heaven; bored others to extinction; and made one foolish girl giggle irrepressibly. In the same way his eyes were brown to some, grey to others, and again a very bright blue. But there is one point upon which all who listened are agreed; not one of them could remember a single word he said. All, however, with astonishing unanimity are agreed that it was "like"—the waves of the ocean, the flowing of a mighty river, the splendour of the Aurora Borealis, the radiance of the Milky Way. Almost all are equally agreed that waves, river, Borealis, and Milky Way lacked, as Lady Jerningham tersely put it, "behind." From their accounts it is clear that he avoided contradiction; detested personality; cared nothing who you were; only needed some sound of breathing or rustle of skirts to stir his flocks of dreaming thoughts into motion and light the glitter and magic that lay sunk in the torpid flesh. Was it the mixture of body and mind in his talk that gave off some hypnotic fume that lulled the audience into drowsiness? He acted as he talked; now, if he felt the interest flag, pointing to a picture, or caressing a child, and then, as the time to make an exit approached, majestically possessed himself of a bedroom candlestick and, still discoursing, disappeared. Thus played upon by gesture and voice, brow and glittering eye, no one, as Crabb Robinson remarks, could take a note. It is then in his letters, where the body of the actor was suppressed, that we have the best record of the siren's song. There we hear the voice that began talking at the age of two—"Nasty Doctor Young" are his first recorded words; and went on in barracks, on board ship, in pulpits, in stage coaches—it mattered not where he found himself or with whom, Keats it might be or the baker's boy—on he went, on and on, talking about nightingales, dreams, the will, the volition, the reason, the understanding, monsters, and mermaids, until a little girl, overcome by the magic of the incantation, burst into tears when the voice ceased and left her alone in a silent world.

We too, when the voice stops only half an hour before he passed that July day in 1834 into silence, feel bereft. Is it for hours or for years that this heavily built man standing in a gate has been pouring forth this passionate soliloquy, while his "large soft eyes with a peculiar expression of haze or dreaminess mixed in their light" have been fixed upon a far-away vision that filled a very few pages with poems in which every word is exact and every image as clear as crystal?

VIRGINIA WOOLF

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* *Coleridge the Talker*. Edited by Richard W. Armour and Raymond F. Howes. Oxford Press. 24s.

FROM JONATHAN CAPE'S AUTUMN LIST

Friends of a Lifetime: Letters to Sydney Carlyle Cockerell; edited by Viola Meynell. *Illustrated. 18s. 0d.* (Ready)

"The gold is plentiful. The lovableness of Philip Webb, the equal but different lovableness of Lethaby, that shining mixture of sensitiveness and steely sharpness, the dashing and daring of Ouida . . . . these are treasures ; so are Mahaffy's opinion of Dowden, reported by Yeats, and Conrad's judgment of Wilfrid Blunt . . ." *The Times Literary Supplement.*

Kilvert's Diary: Vol. III, 1874-79: edited by William Plomer. *12s. 6d.* (November)

The third, and alas ! the last volume of the Rev. Francis Kilvert's Diary, the completion of the self portrait of a lovable man, and his intimate story of Victorian life.

The Advance of the Fungi: by E. C. Large. *Illustrated. 18s. 0d.* (November)

A brilliant history of the rise of the science of plant-pathology, in which the author (also of *Sugar in the Air*, *Asleep in the Afternoon*, and a specialist in fungicides) tells not only the scientific story, but relates it to human history, to economic and social development from 1840 to to-day. A book of first importance to the phyto-pathologist, the science-teacher, the historian and sociologist.

Private and Official: by Nourah Waterhouse. *Illustrated. 15s. 0d.* (November)

Lady Waterhouse's book of memoirs, anecdotes and personal sketches will prove a mine of information to the historian of the 1920-30 decade. Here is a brilliant account of the *coulisses* of politics, of the relation of the Crown to the Prime Minister, and of the Prime Minister to his party. It is something of the heart of politics.

The Georgics of Virgil: A new verse translated by C. Day Lewis. *5s. 0d.* (Ready)

"I thought I knew the Georgics pretty well, but in a score of places Mr. Day Lewis has shown me points which I had missed, and brought into relief images which I had not properly visualised." G. M. YOUNG in the *Spectator.*

Sagittarius Rhyming: by Sagittarius. *5s. 0d.* (November)

To readers of the *New Statesman* it is superfluous to recommend Sagittarius. Here is the best of six years' work.

FICTION

Come Back to Erin: by Sean O'Faolain.

The Gantillons: by Robert Liddell.

Across the Black Waters: by Mulk Raj Anand.

Darkness at Noon: by Arthur Koestler.

The Beauty of the Dead, and other stories by H. E. Bates.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

The Curious Lobster: by Richard Warren Hatch. *Illustrated. 7s. 6d.*

The Curious Lobster's Island: by Richard Warren Hatch. *Illustrated. 7s. 6d.*

They Wanted Adventure: by Kenneth Macfarlane. *Illustrated. 7s. 6d.*

The Belgian Twins: by Lucy Fitch Perkins. *Illustrated. 7s. 6d.*

The Big Six: by Arthur Ransome. *Illustrated. 7s. 6d.*

30, BEDFORD SQUARE : LONDON : W.C.1

WISHFUL THINKING AND THE LIGHT NOVEL

Quick Service. By P. G. WODEHOUSE. *Herbert Jenkins.* 7s. 6d.

Cheerfulness Breaks In. By ANGELA THIRKELL. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7s. 6d.

Passenger List. By OLGA L. ROSMANITH. *Murray.* 7s. 6d.

Miss Hargreaves. By FRANK BAKER. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 7s. 6d.

Just As I Feared. By DAMARIS ARKLOW. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

Professor Whitehead once remarked that every philosophy is coloured by a secret imaginative background which does not officially form part of its doctrines. Obviously this is even truer of fiction, but it has perhaps been less noticed that it is truest of all of very low-grade "light" fiction, the sort of thing that is turned out semi-automatically by "natural" writers of the type of Edgar Wallace and Ethel M. Dell. In both of these writers one can discern a luxuriant fantasy life which they would probably never have admitted to but which was the real motive force behind their stories. As a rule, the more lowbrow the novelist the more thoroughly he gives himself away, like the people who relate their dreams every morning at breakfast. It is easy to guess that Stendhal, for instance, had a fantasy life in which he pictured himself as a duke, but he was too much aware of his own innate snobbishness to let it get on to paper undisguised. In his novels the snob motif is either turned upside down (*Le Rouge et le Noir*), or it reappears as a vision of *spiritual* aristocracy (*La Chartreuse de Parme*). Writers like E. F. Benson, "Saki," Michael Arlen, etc., have no such subtleties, they simply pour their narcissism on to paper with no notion of what they are doing. Consequently, however inferior they may be as novelists, they are probably more reliable guides to the popular fantasies of their time.

Except for *Just as I Feared*, which is satire, all the books on the above list would come under the heading of "light fiction," and in at least three of them the fantasy element is very strongly marked. It is curious that, much as Mr. Wodehouse is read and admired, this aspect of his work never seems to have been studied. He is before all else a "wishful" writer, a dream writer, giving utterance to a vision of life as he would like it to be lived. By their subject-matter ye shall know them, and the subject-matter of Mr. Wodehouse's books is almost invariably the Edwardian house party, the comic man-servant and the idle young man with private means. Behind the farcical incidents there is manifest a vision of life in which the dividends flow in for ever and ever, and the M.C.C. will outlast the Pyramids. I shall no doubt be telling Mr. Wodehouse's admirers most of what they want to know by saying that *Quick Service* falls into the Blandings Castle group. There is the usual country house, the overwhelming butler, the complicated plot in which someone of innocent antecedents is commissioned to steal something, the American millionaire, the happy ending. The phraseology ("he could even get a certain amount of noise-response out of mashed potatoes") is about up to sample. But what is finally noticeable, as in all Mr. Wodehouse's books, is the complete parasitism of outlook. After reading him steadily for a quarter of a century I cannot remember a single one of his books in which the *jeune premier* really works for his living. His heroes either have private incomes, like Bertie Wooster, or they end up with some kind of sinecure job in the retinue of a millionaire. And that, however lightly he may choose to treat it, is obviously the way in which he considers it desirable for a young man to live. His whole vision of life was implicit in his first big hit, *Mike*, which must have appeared somewhere about 1912.

When Mr. Wodehouse was led off into captivity by the Germans, he is said to have remarked to a friend, "Perhaps after this I shall write a serious book." I wonder. It might be very interesting if he did. But what I think is certain is that he cannot continue in the Psmith and Jeeves tradition very much longer. It is already decades out of date. Bertie Wooster is an Edwardian figure, the "knut" of the pre-1914 period, and, incidentally, a much nicer animal than the moneyed young man of to-day. But now the whole of that way of life is being destroyed too completely to survive even in fantasy. Blandings Castle is full of evacuees, Bertie Wooster's shares have slumped to nothing, Baxter is in the Ministry of Information, a bomb has demolished the Drones Club. I hope the Germans are treating Mr. Wodehouse decently, and I hope that later on he will write that serious book. Few writers of our time have used words more skilfully, or squandered better talents.

Miss Thirkell's *Cheerfulness Breaks In* is fantasy once again, but it is much more up to date. At the very bottom it is a fantasy of the boy on the burning deck, of the impoverished nobleman drinking his last bottle of claret in the ruined manor house. Not that that is the overt subject-matter of the book, which is a light and very amusing story of life in a country town in the early dull period of the war. There are some interesting scraps of social history. The evacuation problem is treated from the anti-evacuee angle, which is more widespread and has more to be said for it than is sometimes grasped by left-wing journalists, few of whom live in reception areas. But the underlying "message" of the book is something like this: "We, the Service and professional middle classes, intend to keep our end up. In the face of national disaster, dwindling incomes and unpleasant social contacts, we shall preserve our accustomed way of life and continue to treat everything as a tremendous joke." There is an atmosphere of debonair defiance about the whole book. It is concerned mostly with people who are in the Army or Navy, or who, being on the edge of "the County," have no difficulty in stepping into khaki on the first day of the war. Miss Thirkell is far too good an observer not to know that the military and official dominance of that class is menaced, and she deals faithfully with the social conflicts inevitably produced by war. Part of the action centres round a "good" public school which has to extend its hospitality to a far from "good" London school whose masters are ardent Marxists with Cockney accents. The resulting conversations can be imagined, perhaps. I think "the County" scores rather more regularly than would be the case in real life. The moral seems to be that unpretentious Service people who just do their duty without any fuss about "anti-fascism" are really much nicer than all these Socialists and foreign refugees.

At the same time Miss Thirkell's vision of life has a better chance of surviving than Mr. Wodehouse's. The kind of people she admires, even if they lack intelligence, are not direct parasites and are ultimately more interested in their jobs than in money. Their patriotism, which is by far their deepest emotion, may help them to make the necessary adjustment to a world in which "County" society will have ceased to be. I wish I could hope that they will do it as wittily as Miss Thirkell describes here.

Passenger List is a more ordinary type of woman's novel, the narcissistic kind of book in which the exquisite girl with the auburn hair is wooed by the young man with sensitive lips and a distinguished future. The action takes place on board a luxury liner sailing through the Panama Canal, and in spite of an attempted murder and some "psychological" stuff about a lame girl who is pathologically jealous of her sister, I found it rather slow going. *Miss Hargreaves* is simply a few hundred pages of wasted talent. Conceivably it was written as a literary exercise. It is one of those books which toy with magic while remaining realistic in tone. The hero, while on a visit to Ireland, invents a Victorian poetess named Constance Hargreaves whom he claims to have known since childhood. When he returns to England his imaginary poetess suddenly materialises and begins haunting him in such a way as almost to ruin his life. It is the kind of thing that might make a good short story but is merely tiresome as a full-length book. Mr. Baker could write a much better novel than this.

Just As I Feared, although there is a certain amount of sentiment thrown in, is a satire on Russian society in the period of the purges. It is delicately written, and if it dealt with any other country one would describe it as a Ruritanian comedy of the better kind. Unfortunately the U.S.S.R. is not only a controversial subject but a subject about which it is completely impossible to discover the truth. There exists overwhelming evidence that its inhabitants are the hungriest, the best fed, the happiest, the most miserable, the freest, the least free, the most advanced and the most backward population in the world. One cannot touch such a subject, however lightly, without involving oneself in controversy. This book will get a good review in the *Observer* and a bad review in the *Daily Worker*, and in neither case will its literary merits have much to do with the verdict. Personally I found it amusing, and if I had to pronounce upon its accuracy, which I am not qualified to do, I should say that the descriptions of factory life are more convincing than the comic-opera scenes in which a parachute army lands in the wrong place and a young officer is acclaimed as a "Soviet hero" for shooting a starving woman who has committed sabotage by eating a raw beetroot.

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Switzerland, France, Great Britain, Scandinavia are enmeshed in tremendous and insoluble problems of adjustment to capitalist economy. We see how the flow of migration is made possible and canalised by the growing mesh of international trade. Bulky imports from America demanded a bulky return cargo; after the end of the slave trade this was increasingly provided by the carriage of migrants. Hamburg, Bremen, Le Havre became the central ports for this trade, with Liverpool as a sort of relief port when the others became overtaxed. Enormous numbers of Irish left from Liverpool, and of Germans and Swiss from Le Havre. The migrants were naturally carried to the normal exporting ports of America; and this had an influence on the distribution of immigrant population in the U.S.A. But the presence of well-established national groups exercised a powerful secondary pull. Thousands of Germans, for instance, landed from Le Havre in New Orleans, the main cotton exporting port, went further inland to find territory and neighbours more suited to their talents and settled in St. Louis and Cincinnati. At certain periods it was cheaper or more convenient for emigrants to sail to Quebec; nearly all of them seem to have made their way southwards to New England and farther afield. It is interesting to note that every single scheme of organised transfer of population broke down; the final distribution of population was, however, far from inconsequential, being controlled by overriding economic and geographic factors. Certain technical advances (such as railways to get the people to the ports in Europe and to the interior in America, and the rapid development of navigation in the last days of sail) which were necessary for large scale migration are clearly described.

Apart from the particular story this book has to tell and to which it sticks pretty closely, it throws valuable light on many features of the complex phenomenon of European-American civilisation-in-movement. One sees why America is so stubbornly an agricultural country for all its industry: landhunger was the main motive driving migrants from Europe and the dominant types amongst them were yeomen, smallholders and field-workers. Incidentally the number of political migrants even after 1848 was comparatively very small. One sees how closely America and Europe are bound together in a single culture; and yet one can see too how the "American attitude" to Europe was being fashioned even before the emigrants left Europe. This attitude was to some extent formed in the mind of the intending emigrant by the letters from those who had already crossed over; the differences from Europe were heavily emphasised. But mainly this attitude was formed by the expulsive forces in Europe that were driving the emigrants away. The immigrants showed as deep a desire to escape from the political structure of Europe as they did to preserve their old culture (language, churches, schools). Perhaps the most lasting impression left by this book is that the decisive factor in the Atlantic migration was not the attraction to America but the desire to escape from Europe. It was primarily a European *emigration* and only secondarily and almost accidentally an American *immigration*. This view strengthens the point made in Fyvel's *The Malady and the Vision* that one of the decisive factors in recent European history was the 1924 Act of Congress limiting immigration into the U.S.A., the last free area in the world, and thus effectively checking the outflow of population from Europe.

Professor Hansen's death before the completion of the work that he planned is a serious loss. He has left an important memorial behind him and has opened the way and laid the basis for the solution of many important and still actual problems: such as the creation of a vigorous new province for the Catholic Church just when it was rapidly losing ground in the Old World; or the transplantation to a new environment of German and British Trade Union models; or the part played in internal American politics by the immigrant groups; or the history of the immigration from South and Eastern Europe; and many others.

Mr. Alington's book does not pretend to the importance of Professor Hansen's. It is an attractively modest attempt to give a short account of as much of American history as is necessary for an ordinary Englishman to know. It lays particular stress on the history of the relations between the two countries. Its treatment of internal American politics is sympathetic; the grandeur of the Revolutionary days is a little overdone and no account is taken of Beard's views about the origin of the Constitution. The book has appeared at an opportune moment; it should be read by intelligent people who have not had time to learn much about America. It will do much to correct the largely erroneous views about American history that still prevail in educated circles.

PATRICK GORDON WALKER

CHESTERTON AND BELLOC

On the Place of Chesterton in English Letters. By HILAIRE BELLOC. *Sheed and Ward.* 3s. 6d.

Chesterton was born when the nineteenth century was wearying of the open flamboyant egotism of the romantic individualists, from Byron to Wagner and Victor Hugo, and was ready to believe in the kind of egotist who thrusts himself into notice by denouncing the individual and exalting the community. The world-wide reputations, in literature and action, during the last fifty years have all been won by men who have decried the individual, Shaw, Kipling and Wells, Lenin, Mussolini and Hitler. In this general landslide Chesterton was not strong enough to keep his feet. He had a very quick intelligence, which at once detected the absurdities of others and exposed them with a wonderfully exuberant wit and fancy, but he had little in himself on which to build. It is cleat in his early work, and especially in the verses prefixed to *The Man who was Thursday*, that in his youth the last splutterings of the Romantic movement had a baleful fascination for him. Not to be like Whistler and Wilde, George Moore and Arthur Symons, was his most urgent problem, and to solve it he barricaded himself from their contagion behind gigantic dummy figures which he labelled Dickens, Browning and the Common Man.

As he grew older his work, which had always been controversial, became increasingly so. Controversy is sometimes necessary, but an incessant controversialist is only a man who is trying to lay his own doubts. No one could say that the objects of his attacks, Prussians, progressives, financiers, and the rest, were not open to criticism, but as Chesterton dealt with them they lost all likeness to themselves and became merely the whipping-boys of his own unease. Finally, his desire to see things and men as completely black or completely white, a desire which England, the least totalitarian of countries, could not satisfy, sent him into the Church of Rome, the wealth of which he defended by affirming that the next best thing to being as poor as Christ was to be as rich as his Church.

Belloc, though less witty than his friend Chesterton, was more humorous, and much more solid both as a man and a writer. In *The Path to Rome*, and in some of his essays and verse, he revealed a strain of genius which, had he been more harmonised, would have made him a great writer. But half of him desired power and position, his life has been a

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long civil war, and little is now left of the ravaged landscape of his genius. He has at present only one interest, "The Faith," and everything he writes betrays this obsession. For example, in this pamphlet on Chesterton, which is supposed to mark his place in English letters, Belloc, realising that to admit that Chesterton spent most of his life in advocacy would damage Chesterton's defence of Catholicism, says: "Now for advocacy Gilbert Chesterton had all his life not only an invincible repulsion but an inability to be attracted by it, or even to use it." From internal evidence it appears that this pamphlet was written, or at least revised, since the collapse of France, yet Belloc writes that Christendom is now entering the ultimate phase in the struggle between good and evil, "which is, for us, the battle between the Catholic Church and its opponents." Whatever this may mean to Belloc, to the reader it must mean that Belloc's sympathies are with Catholic Italy and Catholic Spain and the Catholic Marshal of France. Meanwhile the salvaging of everything which Belloc values in Europe depends on a country which may not spell faith with a capital F, but which knows how to keep it, both with others and with itself.

HUGH KINGSMILL

RUSTIC LATIN

Europe's Apprenticeship. By G. G. COULTON. *Nelson.* 8s. 6d.

Dr. Coulton has already placed us all under obligation by his learned and delightful studies in medieval history. I had always hoped for more; for, as Cicero says, it is the mark of a healthy mind to be willing to owe more to one to whom you already owe much; and, in this little book Dr. Coulton has met my desire. It is full of erudition "worn lightly as a flower," and charming on every page. Anyone with an elementary knowledge of Latin will be able to appreciate it, and will find it, every now and then, as amusing as a story by Mr. Wodehouse.

It is "a survey of medieval Latin," beginning with a general discussion of the subject, and concluding with a selection of illustrative passages from writers of the fifth century to those of the fifteenth, when the return to classicism was on the way. Dr. Coulton starts with showing how impossible it is for the most learned man to get rid of his mother-tongue. Even Oliver Wendell Holmes's Professor, if the day had been really desperately hot, would not have wished to "curr to quercine shades"; some good sound English would have been the natural expression of his feelings. And Dr. Coulton gives several examples from earlier ages. St. Bridget of Sweden's revelations came to her not in Latin but in Swedish; great German scholars prayed, privately, in German; and even Erasmus's last words were in Dutch. I remember a German friend of mine, who had been forty years in England, and was a perfect English scholar, who yet, when he missed a stroke at tennis, invariably said "Donner Wetter."

The result was that the Latin of the ordinary monk and priest was almost invariably bad: the rules of concord were constantly violated, tenses were confused, the vocabulary was tinged with native words. Even Pope John XII wrote "excommunico vos da Deum, ut non habeatis Licentiam nullum ordinare." A charter of Cluny has "ego in Dei nomen rogitus escripsit." Nor could even real scholars express their best thoughts as easily or accurately in Latin as in their native tongue. We know that one of the difficulties of the Vatican Council was that the Latin of the French Bishops was not the Latin of the German; and a Maynooth Professor has ascribed the ignorance of many of his pupils to the fact that his lectures had to be in a dialect they could not follow.

Some of the instances given by Dr. Coulton will astonish even those who remember that Chaucer gave Fame the wings of a partridge (perdrix) because Virgil had endowed her "pernicibus alis." Thus an Abbot translated the first words of the Mass Preface, "acquum et salutare," "the horse jumped" (equus saltavit). A priest, expounding the story of the Canaanite woman, told his congregation that she was a canine woman, half dog half-human. Another translated the "asso et favo mellis" of Luke XXIV. 42 as "a piece of ass-fish and honeyed beans," confusing *asso* with *asino* and *favo* with *faba*. Sir Thomas More tells us of the man who preached to his people on "Te igitur clementissime Pater," and informed them that Te Igitur was the father of St. Clement.

There were examinations, but most of these were as farcical as the famous one which gave Lord Eldon a degree in Hebrew for knowing the meaning of Golgotha. "We asked Nicholas Quesnel the sense of 'et vidit lucem quod esset bona,' and he answered 'it was a good thing to do.'" These specimens, and scores of others, show that the Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum do not exaggerate, and that Erasmus's story of the priest who defended the burning of heretics by quoting St. Paul's "hominem haereticum devita" as if it meant "deprive a heretic of life," is not only true but typical.

The fact is that the Church, insisting on Latin in its services and its officers, was up against a stubborn and ineradicable characteristic of human nature. There are twenty who either cannot or will not learn to one who can and will; and the *vis inertiae* in the long run prevails. Gradually even the learned saw how vain it was to contend with this silent force. They saw also that the dullards were, after all, in the right; that the vernacular was a better vehicle of

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thought than the acquired—or not acquired—language of the schools. Dante's master, Brunetto Latini, a first-rate scholar, wrote his Trésor in French, because, as he said, he was then in France and "because this speech is more delectable and more common to all men." Dante himself followed in his De Vulgari Eloquentia: "Vernacular speech is that which we learn by imitating our nurses; it is the nobler, as being natural to us, whereas the other is artificial." His Latin Divina Commedia did not cover a score of verses; the Italian will live for ever. Petrarch and Boccaccio might seek immortality by their Latin writings; they have gained it by writing to be understanded of the common people. By the end of the fourteenth century the victory was practically won, and England was ready for Malory and Tyndale, Germany for Brandt and Luther.

The thirty or forty passages chosen to illustrate the changes in medieval Latin will interest the reader not only by their style but by their matter. Each of them says something worth reading. There are five or six extracts from the Vulgate, and here one can notice how Jerome, Ciceronian as he had been in his unregenerate days, cannot help conforming to the grammar of his time: "Scimus *quoniam* omnia operantur in bonum"—"we know that all things work together for good." Incidentally, like all translators he seems to have been influenced by the idiom of his original: "audite audientes me," which is simply a slavish rendering of the Hebrew emphatic repetition of a verb. Elsewhere he actually gives us the literal "Who will give"—*quis dabit?* or *quis tribuerit?*—instead of the proper equivalent *utinam* or "would that." Thus for "In the morning thou wilt say Would God it were evening" he has "Mane dices Quis mihi det vesperum."

From St. Augustine we have the well-known chapter describing his conversion, and the still more familiar one on the death of his mother, Monica. Here a note of Dr. Coulton's tempts me to make a digression. We know that Augustine was struck with amazement by seeing St. Ambrose reading without moving his lips. I have always thought that the growth of this miracle into a common habit has had far more influence on the appreciation of literature than is commonly imagined. Many lines of poetry, for example, we read thus with a mental sense of their beauty which vanishes when we read them aloud. Here, I think, is an explanation of some varieties of taste.

But there is no need to go on longer. Let the reader take up the book himself and peruse the story of the death of Alboin, a passage from Walter of Aquitaine (a fragment of which is one of our earliest English poems), a Benedictine denunciation of the Friars, a selection of hymns, or anything else from the plentiful store here provided.

E. E. KELLETT

CRUSADER FROM YESTERDAY

Crusade for Civilisation. By DR. ESMÉ WINGFIELD-STRATFORD. *Routledge.* 7s. 6d.

"The material scales are grossly weighted against us, and we are standing alone," says Dr. Wingfield-Stratford in the epilogue of his book about the war. "Enough that we have only our own souls to rely on now. . . ." This may be half the truth. But the other half is that the British Government is certainly relying on the armament factories of Pittsburgh and Detroit and Chicago to right the weighted scales as quickly as possible.

This fault—of putting forward half-truths as if they were the whole truth—runs through the whole of Dr. Wingfield-Stratford's *Crusade for Civilisation*. He claims to be a Tory Imperialist—but with ideals. He declares that this is no ordinary war; that Britain's cause is that of all civilisation against the barbarism of Britain's enemies; critical of Kipling's jingoism, he believes Britain should no longer rule India by force, but in return the Indians should admit their disunity and weakness and strive not for independence, but for equal partnership in the great British Commonwealth under the Statute of Westminster.

All these sentiments are *partly* admirable. Yet the author's Crusade has small prospects of rallying Indian nationalists or even anti-Hitler Germans or Norwegians or Czechs. Not merely because of his exalted belief in Britain's mission or his strategic avoidance of the economic factor in discussing the British Empire. There is something even more disturbing about this book. The author himself gives a clue when comparing the obvious and barbaric imperialism of *Stalky & Co.* unfavourably with his own more refined ideal of Dominion Status. But better the crudeness of *Stalky & Co.* (Kipling has been over-maligned; he grasped the essential inarticulateness of English patriotism) than the ideals of the "person" who on speech-day horrified the assembled boys by unfurling and waving a Union Jack before them. And, unfortunately, this is what Dr. Wingfield-Stratford is doing: waving a Union Jack in front of the British Empire, in front of British Toryism with all its threadbare patches. And this is all wrong. The Union Jack is no flag for Nuremberg Rallies.

In his recent *Twenty Years' Crisis* Professor E. H. Carr dealt caustically with those idealist British patriots who are shocked by Continental empires based on "militarism," but who are unable, for want of a parallel word "navalism," to see that the British Empire rested just as much on force. Dr. Wingfield-Stratford might have stepped straight from the pages of Professor

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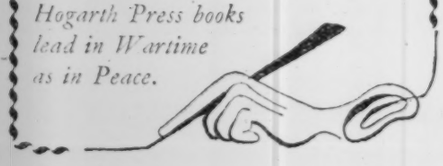

Carr's book. He sees half the truth: that the British Commonwealth has offered examples of democratic co-operation. But he cannot apparently see that as a unit the Commonwealth could not survive the defeat of the British Navy by a month. Even a year ago this might have been relatively harmless. But to-day, when the hapless population of London's slums has been driven underground and Britain stands in desperate need of allies in the war, such Tory self-deception becomes more sinister. Because, far from apologising for the recent disasters of British ruling class policy, Dr. Wingfield-Stratford would still like them to be forgotten; full of admiration for that embodiment of British uprightness, Mr. Chamberlain, he deplores further controversy over Munich. But to his claim that it was Britain, and not the unhappy populations of Vienna, Prague and Madrid, which made "concessions" to the Nazis in the interests of peace, the answer has already been given: by Nazi bombs over London, while Britain, without an effective friend on the Continent, fights alone. A Quisling, a Pétain for a Runciman! But, unfortunately, Dr. Wingfield-Stratford does not see it yet.

Or take the old superstition, that Britain, after the exhausting Boer War simply and nobly gave back the whole of South Africa "to constitute itself a free commonwealth under the government of a Boer majority and flying the Boer colours." This as an example of the superiority of the Englishman who "will show greater enthusiasm in throwing his *imperium* out of the window than he ever did in acquiring it." That the Boer War gained Britain possession of the Rand gold mines which were never thrown away; that the cynical deal between the Boers and the mining interests meant a British betrayal of the Native majority to permanent subjection at a level comparable to any under the Nazis—all this Dr. Wingfield-Stratford has apparently successfully pushed out of mind. "This is no place to weigh the pros and cons of the native question in South Africa," he declares. No, indeed not; much better vaguely admit that the British Empire is not perfect, and hurry off waving the Union Jack. As said before, this is a disturbing book; disturbing because of the complete inability of Tory imperialists to see either themselves or the world around them. Dr. Wingfield-Stratford in a sorrowful epilogue is shocked to the core by France's "desertion" of Britain. But he cannot grasp that "Non-intervention" and Lord Runciman laid the way wide open for Marshal Pétain, just as he seems still unaware of the immense revolutionary crisis in which Britain is involved. But his book should be read as an example of that official British Conservative outlook which has led to Trondheim, Dunkirk and Dakar, that spirit of incomprehension which still influences the Churchill-Halifax Government to-day.

T. R. FYVEL

DETECTION

Murder at Buzzards Bay. By ANTHONY ABBOT. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.

The Bishop's Crime. By H. C. BAILEY. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

The Black Gloves. By CONYTH LITTLE. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.

Over My Dead Body. By REX STOUT. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.

The Department of Queer Complaints. By CARTER DICKSON. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

The Secret Vanguard. By MICHAEL INNES. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

When an American millionaire informs his heirs that he intends to endow an Institute for Psychical Research with a million dollars, provided he is convinced of the genuineness of Doctor Adolf de Selles' spiritual manifestations, he might as well have the Homicide Squad ready on the premises, for somebody is bound to be murdered before the *séances* are out. Fortescue Baxter does the next best thing, as he invites Thatcher Colt down to Buzzards Bay for the critical week-end; but *Murder at Buzzards Bay* gets busy even before that redoubtable ex-policeman arrives on the scene. Mr. Abbot has picked on a familiar old plot, but he plays fair, even when the lights are out and the spirits begin to hover; and one of his *tableaux* is a spectacular treat. It's not an enviable position, to wake fuddled from drink and sleep in the small hours of the morning to find a lady in bed beside you, and your wife standing in the doorway—but it has been known to occur. The quandary is surely unique, if, when you try to disentangle yourself from the mess, you realise that the lady's arms are inseparably clamped round your neck in *rigor mortis*. I liked that passage very much in *Murder at Buzzards Bay*, and Mr. Abbot makes very subtle use of its intriguing implications. The rest of the book is pitched in a lower key, and Thatcher Colt is painfully slow and methodical in his procedure—an American counterpart of Inspector French.

Mr. Fortune, in spite of heavy meals with detailed *menus* and prolonged siestas, finds it hard to expand his energy to the dimensions of a full-length novel. Most fortunately he loves children, especially little girls; so his author gives him time off for several chapters of *The Bishop's Crime* to play Indians with a horrid little imp, in short skirts. Even so, it takes three murders and much translating of medieval documents to keep Reggie out of coma for such a long stretch. The plot revolves round Badon Cathedral, where the Dean and the Bishop and the Bishop's little girl are all struggling to assert themselves. The Close is also frequented by crooks, who tend to get murdered for the purpose of bringing Reggie to the spot. Mr. Bailey is always readable, though often irritating. His intense preoccupation with Reggie, effective enough in a short story, is a severe handicap in dealing with crimes on a larger scale. The side-issues are scamped, the red herrings have no pungency, and the garden paths, up which the reader is meant to be led, have no windings. The master villain of *The Bishop's Crime* is shamefully obvious in consequence, the instant we catch sight of him (or her?) in the streets of Badon.

The Crime Club have discovered a new name in Miss Conyth Little: it was time they introduced some new blood into their stable. In company with all the old hacks Miss Little frisks about like a high-spirited two-year-old: *The Black Gloves* is positively skittish. I am rather dubious, however, whether such a merry young authoress will ever settle down to steady work in detective harness. The fun is so continuous in *The Black Gloves* that when body after body is discovered in improbable situations one begins to wonder whether the climax of the joke will not prove to be a well-acted charade. Probably Miss Little intends her crimes to be taken seriously, but I do not advise anyone to do so. *The Black Gloves* should not be read as detection, but as a rest from detection.

Mr. Rex Stout also fancies himself as a comic writer when he describes the exploits of his mountainous Nero Wolfe. In *Over My Dead Body* the fat man gets entangled with some Jugoslav ladies at a fencing academy in New York, where one of the clients has the misfortune to get run through with a murderous foil. Fat men are always supposed to be funny, broken English ought to be funny, a Jugoslav daughter speaking broken English to her fat father should be exceptionally funny, but what little fun there is to be found in *Over My Dead Body* comes from poor old henchman Archie and his overworked wise-cracks. Nero himself I can only regard as a fleshy bore of meagre intelligence. When you discover that Jugo-

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slavia is not in the plot for its broken English and that there are spies about, you may decide as I do, that international conspiracies are no laughing matter. Mr. Stout has invented an intelligent detective in Tecumseh Fox (see *Double for Death* only two months ago) and should stick to him.

The Department of Queer Complaints is a collection of short detective stories, plus one ghost story, by the master of contraption, Carter Dickson. If any one hopes for a galaxy of subtle devices he will be disappointed. The stories are readable but never brilliant, and the level of invention singularly low for an author with such a fertile imagination. The ghost story will not make your flesh creep.

I have left Mr. Michael Innes's thriller to the last, as it is not in any sense detection. But for sheer excitement and picturesque melodrama *The Secret Vanguard* will delight everyone with a taste for such things. Mr. Innes's talent for pastiche serves him faithfully, even gloriously, in this most hackneyed branch of fiction. Every step of *The Thirty-Nine Steps* he treads again with the punctiliousness of a don and the fidelity of a Scotsman. And if one Scotsman, John Buchan, could set himself to compose the super-thriller of the last war by mixing the right ingredients in the proper quantities, so can Michael Innes for this war. Only it is perhaps a pity to use exactly the *same* ingredients.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

THE COMMUNIST CASE

The Traitor Class. By IVOR MONTAGU. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 2s.

What, people ask me, is the present policy of the Communist Party? Let them have a shot at finding the answer in Ivor Montagu's *The Traitor Class*. It is an ingenious piece of work, packed with well-selected quotations designed equally to discredit Chamberlainites, Churchillians and Labour leaders. Part of its thesis is unanswerable. Pétainism in France was no accident; it was the logical climax of a long period of confused struggle in which an influential section of the ruling class of France decided, as Flandin once admitted, that if French Fascism could not suppress the popular forces it would be better to let the Nazis do it than to run the risk of Bolshevism. Montagu can show, with many apt quotations, that similar forces in this country have actively supported and helped Fascism abroad, and that some who belong to this group still hold influential positions in Britain. He argues rightly that it "can happen here," if we do not all fight hard to prevent it. The question arises whether Communist policy is the best for that purpose. I can find no explanation of why Montagu thinks that it is. He avoids discussion of the inner contradiction of the Communist Party, which was one of the forces in France which undermined popular resistance to Hitler and which therefore greatly aided the Lavals and Pétains. He argues correctly that the lack of preparation and the weakness of leadership in Daladier's France and Chamberlain's England were due to the reluctance of the upper class to make the kind of changes which were necessary for war preparation and to run the risk of releasing the popular forces that were necessary if the democracies were to be defended. But he nowhere says whether, if the ruling class were upset, as he wants it to be, the Communists would then want to defend Britain against Hitler. And yet that is surely a rather important point.

Mr. Montagu is quite sure that Communism will save us from all the evils of Capitalism including first and foremost those of the present war. And he has the audacity to quote Marx on the Commune of 1871! True, Napoleon III was defeated and fled, much as the rulers of France have been to-day. True, one reason was that he himself was a tyrant who relied on the forces of reaction and not on the common people of France. But the Commune in Paris was determined to defeat the Prussian invader, while Montagu only seems concerned with the defeat of our own government. Or does he think, as P.O.U.M. thought in Spain, that you can make a revolution of the Proletariat during the war without ensuring a Fascist victory? And does he think that if you do allow foreign Fascism to be victorious that there would then be any chance of revolution afterwards? He violently attacks Chamberlain and Co. for failure to prepare for the war, and then equally attacks the Labour party for supporting and intensifying the war effort when the British ruling class at last got round to fighting. Occasionally he talks about war with a horror and disgust which I share to the utmost. But if I or anyone else came out with a proposal to make peace with Hitler, Montagu would presumably denounce the attempt as Pétainism. The key to this riddle? First that war is always right if fought by or in alliance with Russia and always wrong otherwise. It is right to bomb Helsinki, but wrong to bomb Berlin or Chung-Kin. I am not sure, on this view, whether it is right to bomb London or not. Secondly, the present object of propaganda is to discredit every possible leader and Party except the Communists, because sometime or other, whether Hitler wins or Anglo-American Imperialism wins, people will get angry with the war and with all the past leadership and, it is to be hoped, look to the Communists to lead them to a new world. I share this impatient desire to overthrow this system that gives us war, and rebuild on a Socialist basis. But the snag that I see in the classic Communist anti-war tactic when applied to-day is that a revolution such as Russia experienced in 1917 would simply mean the absorption of Britain in the Third Reich. In 1917 it merely meant that the Kaiser's Germany could occupy some of Russia, that Lenin could sign the treaty of Brest Litovsk and then proceed to build the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics within the new frontiers. An English Lenin would not have that opportunity. TOM PAINE

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The title of the second instalment of Mrs. Compton Mackenzie's autobiography rouses expectations that it will be even more outspoken than the first, but candour is tempered with discretion as skilfully in *More Than I Should* as it was in *As Much as I Dare*. I was never conscious while I was reading this entertaining book that the writer was saying more than she should. My impression, rather, was that she was saying less than she might, not to avoid giving pain or offence, but to protect herself and people dear to her from the misinterpretation of undiscerning readers. She is frank up to a point. Beyond it most reticent, although as we can tell from her title, she is not aware of this.

"You and I have had, and are having, a lovely life," Viola Tree wrote to her after the publication of *As Much as I Dare*. "We enjoy it to the full. Even sorrows one sort of enjoys." The privilege of sharing this "lovely life" (up to a point) is one for which we cannot be too grateful in these far from lovely times. We can, if we buy or borrow *More Than I Should* share it in lovely islands—Capri, Herm, Jethou, the

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HARRAP

Shiants. In Capri we have to share Mrs. Compton Mackenzie's "acceptance of hard-boiled drunks and sitters-up all night," at which Viola Tree marvelled. Her acceptance, too, of the extraordinary women whose antics made Capri hum in the naughty 'twenties. We meet Norman Douglas in a rage with D. H. Lawrence, and Lawrence in an angelic mood. "To me that night he seemed an angel, and I gave him some of the secrets of my heart which hitherto had never been let loose." He seemed, later on, a devil when he published a short story "which he could not have written if I had not dined with him that night in Capri. . . . A malicious caricature of Monty, and a monstrous perversion of the facts." We meet Monty (as Compton Mackenzie is known to his intimates), Rebecca West, and other celebrities. "Rebecca was writing her novel *The Judge* and she would work most of the day in her own peculiar attitude, kneeling, never sitting, on a chair at the table, murmuring softly over her manuscript. There was no fuss about her writing: she seemed oblivious to the passage of Carolina or myself through the salon where she wrote." The "lovely life" in Capri is exciting, rather too exciting for me. I was happier in Jethou and the Shiants. And so was "Monty" I believe. He, by the way, is the central figure of the book. His wife's study of him is not at all idolatrous. It will be a valuable contribution to his biography.

It is hard to take leave of such a delightful companion as Mrs. Compton Mackenzie. As I turn away from sharing her life, I like to recall a little incident in it, a visit to Frieda Lawrence at Hammersmith. "With her cornstack hair she was like a cheerful young lion. Her blue eyes glittered with more mischief than usual, for we discussed two lately published books on Lawrence by Mabel Dodge Luhan and Catherine Carswell. 'And B-r-r-ett is writing one too!' She gave a great laugh. 'And so am I!' Frieda could laugh at these possessive affinities kicking up the dust round poor Lawrence's memory. She knew she had been the one—the only one—for him. And that's a fine thing for the wife of an idol to keep at the back of her mind."

Having spent an unconscionably long time trying to find an appropriate title for this composite review—of course it is much better to wait passively for such an elusive thing to turn up—I ought to refrain from expressing my surprise that Mrs. Esther Meynell should have been unable to find a better name for "a book of the mind. . . the tale of imperishable consolations with which the author has built for herself a stronghold of defence against the assaults of time and chance" than *A Woman Talking*, but I can't keep it to myself. It seems to me there is a real risk that this unfortunate title, promising no more than trivial feminine gossip, may put off the cultivated readers for whom the book is intended. Even the Book Society's label, "Recommended" cannot persuade me my fears are groundless.

Foremost among Mrs. Meynell's "imperishable consolations" are country things, books and music. Nevertheless the first part of her book, which the publisher says is "not an autobiography," is devoted to "Persons." She describes in detail her friendship with Lord Fisher, with whom she was brought in contact through her passion for naval history. Her portrait of this extraordinary person is first-rate. So is her sketch of her aunt by marriage, the poet, Alice Meynell:

> The delicate loveliness of her poems, the exquisite and studied beauty of her prose made her seem to me a person not quite of this earth. . . . But there was nothing consciously alarming about her—her manner had not only grace but warmth. Her large melancholy and somewhat startled-looking dark eyes had a way of retreating themselves from whatever company she might be in, and she could sink into long silences, which seemed as natural to her as idle chatter to most people. She was tall and very slender, and had a somewhat stiff grace—she never lounged or drooped. Her dresses, which were usually black, fitted very perfectly, and swirled in fluted folds to her feet. She often wore, even in her own house, a large black hat, poised very elegantly on her dark hair.

Certainly Mrs. Meynell can write with as sensitive a perception about "persons" she has known in the flesh as about "persons" she has known in the spirit through their works, Bach, Wordsworth, Hardy, and many others. "Bach is not my only loved musician, though always, and supremely first." Mrs. Meynell's rather perfunctory (and unscholarly) references to Mozart and Beethoven suggest, however, that Bach is the only composer she has loved enough to study intensively. "No one ever wrote more exactly as the mood took him, without consideration or forethought, than Beethoven." This of the composer who considered the end of the Funeral March movement in the "Eroica" so deeply that there are eight different versions of it in one of his note-books! "Mozart, the eternally young, the deliciously gay." I am sorry to find Mrs. Meynell contributing to the grotesque misunderstanding of Mozart.

Mr. Bernard Darwin has borrowed the title of his reminiscences from Borrow, and it is apt. It is clear he has found life sweet, sweetest perhaps on a golf course. Golf, he declares, has kept him young in body and in mind. He writes well about it (as readers of his articles in the *Times* know), making us endorse his opinion that "there is to be found as good writing on sport or games, as simple and clear, as spirited, racy and moving as on almost any other subject." His recollections of his childhood ring true. I like his remark that his memories of his famous grandfather are so mild and dull that they must be his own. "No one could have invented them for me." He confesses that he had no notion that the great man was any more important than anyone else's grandfather. Eton, Cambridge, the Bar, Fleet Street, the last war—how honestly, how charmingly he describes each of these periods in his life. He is indeed good company.

Mr. Kornitzer, who describes himself as "a fisher of gems, a scraper of gems, a trader in gems, and even a bit of a philosopher about gems," has been amazed to find how little is known of these "lovely products of sea and forest" by the general public. *The Jewelled Trail* is one of several books he has written on the subject, and its jacket is adorned with gems from enthusiastic press notices of its predecessors. "Fascinating" glitters in every line. It happens to be the right word for Mr. Kornitzer's experiences as a gem-dealer, and I can use no other about *The Jewelled Trail*. Oh yes, I can! Informative. But it lacks the appropriate sparkle. I shall never speak of a diamond as a precious stone again. Has not Mr. Kornitzer impressed on me that it is "*sui generis* a thing apart, just diamond"? It is not a gaffe, however, to speak of this glorified carbon as a gem. It is interesting to know that poison rings of the Renaissance period are still to be had. "How cunningly those old goldsmiths hid their diabolical work. That ring could be worn for hours safely, but sooner or later the wearer would be bound to knock it lightly against something, and release the poisoned dart. Even a handclasp would be enough." Fascinating.

CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN

ARRIVISTS ALL

The Orchid Hunters. By NORMAN MACDONALD. *Hale.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

A Greenhorn in Africa. By ROGER COURTNEY. *Herbert Jenkins.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

England Without End. By JOHN R. ALLAN. *Methuen.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

My Alpine Album. By FRANK S. SMYTHE. *Black.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Lakeland Through the Lens. By W. A. POUCHER. *Chapman and Hall.* 18*s.*

"Escapist," as Mr. MacCarthy pointed out in these columns last week, is a critical noun that has lost its value. It is the word we all agree to hiss at explorers, romantic novelists, tramps, dog-lovers, legionaries, butterfly hunters, actors and missionaries, but not for some reason at brewers, psychologists and the wary who catch the 8.15. A swallow presumably is an escapist, while a limpet is not. Well, there is another way of looking at these things, and that is in terms not of emotional failure but of practical achievement. The authors of the books listed above have all, in one way or another, achieved something that matches with their view of life: capturing orchids, photographing animals, scaling mountain tops or merely travelling around in the ordinary way. Shall we call them, for a change, arrivists? They are caught by a desire, they plan, they set out, they enjoy and suffer in the way they have chosen; in other words, they arrive.

The Orchid Hunters roused my curiosity by its title, and though it is not a very good or skilfully written book, the subject holds out well. Two young Americans, one a stockbroker's clerk, the other a radio mechanic, decided to go after orchids, and read up all they could find on them. Together with a store of expert knowledge, they absorbed all the relevant clichés—"When a man falls in love with orchids he'll do anything to possess the one he wants; it's like chasing a green-eyed woman or taking cocaine; a sort of madness. . . ." There's a shade too much of that theme-song (the word "exotic" might have been banned from the book for a start), but considering the temptations, and the fact that every hunter is expected to bring back his quota of mumbo-jumbo, Mr.

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"Stirring stuff and readable every page of it." *Reynolds News.*

"Will be widely read, for its attractive style and because it reflects the mood of readers." *The Listener.*

SECKER AND WARBURG

MacDonald lets us off lightly. The expert endurance of the two hunters carried them through the complications of getting orders, making dangerous journeys in unknown country, tracking down "strikes" as elusive as gold, collecting, packing and dispatching the plants in perfect condition and in time to catch the market's seasons. Their hunting ground was Colombia and the plains of Casanare, and finally Venezuela, where they made their biggest scoop —a thousand specimens of Cattleya Mossiae, the scented Easter Orchid. By this time they were as keen as truffle-hounds, and the details of the chase are thrilling. The plants grow mostly on lichened trees or mossy rocks in tropical country varying from 2,000 to 5,000 feet above sea level; and to discover them meant days and weeks of blind travel. The polite obstruction of the natives of the country who met every inquiry with a benign "Who knows?" did not make matters easier, especially as it was almost impossible to explain to them why any effort should be directed to acquiring so useless a plant. I found *The Orchid Hunters* exciting.

Mr. Courtney's dreams of adventure took him to Africa and to the time-honoured haunts where men can be men and *lebensraum* is *lebensraum*. His material—the training of a professional big-game hunter to all those pursuits of hippo, elephant and lion which have decorated our country houses—is less promising than Mr. MacDonald's but provides unexpected flashes. For one thing the big-game hunter's world has changed, and he finds himself relying now on camera shot rather than gunshot and combines the business of guide to tourists with the pleasures of roughing and rogueing it. There aren't nearly so many carcases about—a great improvement—though in moments of stress the hunter still enjoys "the embraces of the forest" or stands "frozen in his tracks" while a "snarling brute" rustles the undergrowth. He has, though, as Mr. Courtney proves, developed a new and disinterested eye. Turn to his chapter on the termites and you will find, in brief, a description which loses little on Maeterlinck and contains first-hand touches of its own. First an ardvaark (that kangaroo from Breughel) makes a breach in the termites' fort and licks up the insects as though they were hundreds and thousands in a paper-bag. The ardvaark is interrupted by a leopard, holds it own, and they both make off. Then into the breach there pours the advance guard of a neighbouring army of ants which have somehow got scent of what has happened; and Mr. Courtney was able to watch the ruthless efficiency of these warriors all the length of their march and into the line of battle. While he bends over watching them as one might a human army from a reconnaissance plane, he lets his fag-end drop across their path: the burning obstacle is immediately removed by the nearest ants which sacrifice themselves in the exploit. That dropped fag-end shows a touch of practical imagination.

England Without End describes the journey of a Scotsman through a country as remote to him as Tasmania might be to you and me. One evening, with three fellow Scots, he visited a Northern fair; their enjoyment seems to have struck awe into the hearts of the inhabitants. Mr. Allen explores most corners of the native life, from Hayling Island to Piccadilly Circus, and there is not much that has escaped his appraising and sometimes pawky eye. Perhaps I am prejudiced against this sort of book, having no taste for the niceties of Scots repartee. However, Mr. Allen is disarming in his enthusiasm. It's not every touring Scotsman who would give up an evening to *The Masterbuilder* at Hull; and he, I'm sorry to say, left after Act I.

The two photographic records *My Alpine Album* and *Lakeland Through the Lens* will appeal to all except oriophobes. The first has pictures of the Swiss and Austrian Alps taken by the author and is far the more varied and eye-pleasing of

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the two. With pine-woods and valleys, flower dotted slopes, huddled villages, footmarks in the snow and the dramatic isolations of ridge and peak, how could a photographer fail? This is where the camera, with its cool values, has an immense advantage over the brush. And Mr. Smythe is an expert photographer as well as an expert mountaineer. *Lakeland Through the Lens* is a tribute to the less dramatic landscape of the English Lakes, and the annotation has special interest for climbers. Now and then Mr. W. A. Poucher catches rock needles or the grassy emptiness of a slope extremely well.

G. W. STONIER

GENERAL RELEASE

Some Versions of Pastoral. By WILLIAM EMPSON. *Chatto and Windus.* 5s.

Broken Water. By JAMES HANLEY. *Chatto.* 5s.

Of Mice and Men. By JOHN STEINBECK. *Heinemann.* 4s. 6d.

One of the minor revolutions which we may expect from the war—and it might be less minor in its effects than some people would imagine—is a revolution in the price of books. The rapid growth of Book Clubs and the success of various "sixpennies" indicate clearly enough that there is already a wider book-*buying* public than the present price of books caters for. The cheap edition and the reprint have done something on a small scale to rectify this, and the situation is somewhat analogous to that which obtains in the film world. If you are the kind of person who cannot bear to wait, or if you are afflicted with the venal snobbery which is only fully satisfied with a seat at the World Première, you pay West End prices for your weakness. If you are mean, cautious or just poor, you wait until the general release. The Book Trade keeps you waiting longer, of course, than the films do; so long that often you may have forgotten a book between its first announcement and its cheap reprint. So it is worth while periodically looking through the publishers' catalogues to see if there is anything you have overlooked.

For instance, *Some Versions of Pastoral* is one of those books which ought not to be missed. Mr. Empson should be our leading younger critic. Perhaps he is; but I say "should be" because he has the kind of faults which are likely to deter anyone who picks up his book casually. He makes no concessions to the reader; his range of reference is very specialist; and his book is wilfully unorganised: he announces at the beginning his intention of pursuing every red herring, and carries through that purpose with an ingenuity and a thoroughness which have to be read to be believed. But it is a mistake to be put off by his manner. *Some Versions of Pastoral* contains some of the most penetrating, suggestive and exciting criticism of literature that has been written for a long time, and it is full not only of the subtle minuteness of analysis by which he made himself a name but, as well, of a number of wider critical correlations which are apposite to the moment. The first essay, for instance, relates proletarian literature to the pastoral convention:

> The essential trick of the old pastoral, which was felt to imply a beautiful relation between rich and poor, was to make simple people express strong feelings (felt as the most universal subject, something fundamentally true about everybody) in learned and fashionable language (so that you wrote about the best subject in the best way). From seeing the two sorts of people combined like this you thought better of both; the best parts of both were used.

And he suggests in a later essay that it is essential for a nation with so marked a class-structure as ours to use some convention of the sort which makes the "classes feel part of a larger unity or simply at home with each other." In fact, of course, as Mr. Empson does not mention, the convention works in this way only from upwards downwards (for the proletariat do not, on the whole, appreciate "learned and fashionable language") and in *Punch's* treatment of charwomen and "other ranks" or in Ian Hay and similar very class-conscious middle-class writers one sees the debased convention working at its plainest.

Those who only know *Seven Types of Ambiguity* might be surprised to find Mr. Empson as revealing with the binoculars as he proved himself in an earlier book with the microscope. What makes *Some Versions of Pastoral* so difficult to read is that we are constantly being switched from one instrument to the other, now surveying the sweep of the landscape, now peering at the minutest particle on one blade of grass. But every specialist will be provoked and stimulated by the whole, and every amateur of letters will find an interest in that first chapter and in the last—an analysis of *Alice in Wonderland*, which is related to pastoral by the proposition that when pastoral proper was finally driven out by puritanism it was replaced by a form of mock-pastoral (*The Beggar's Opera* is his example); "when that goes the pastoral tricks of thought take refuge in child-cult."

From the reading of this witty, devious and exacting book, I turned to the others that I had noticed in the publishers' catalogues with Mr. Empson's ideas buzzing, no doubt, in a rather muddled way through my head, and with a predilection for those which might somehow fit themselves into his categories. James Hanley is one of the best known of our proletarian writers, and so I turned to his autobiography to see what light it would throw on the problems Empson raised. Sure enough, towards the end one comes across an illustration of his thesis, for Mr. Hanley, although a "worker" himself, came from a stratum of society one layer or so higher:

> The poetry of the daily life of men. Factory workers and sailors, dockers and engineers and navvies and shipbuilders. Workers spill poetry each day of their lives without knowing it. The hand that coils a rope, that hauls a weight from the hatch, writes his poem—upon air and upon that minute life of his task . . . the worker's life is full of colour and drama and poetry. It is only when they become articulate that this virgin essence is lost to them . . .

And, becoming articulate, they, then, like Mr. Hanley, make the poetry of those lives—a harsh, near-the-knuckle poetry as a rule—audible to the reading classes and the library subscribers, which is the essence of modern pastoral in Mr. Empson's meaning of the term. And very skilfully Mr. Hanley does this. His "autobiographical excursus" has a warmth of humanity and humour which is sometimes less evident in his novels. Their harshness is, one may suppose, observed more than experienced, for his own young manhood was hard certainly, but not as painful as that of some of his better-known characters. And this lightening of the darkness is reflected in the warmer tone of *Broken Water*.

Of Mice and Men was the long short story which made John Steinbeck famous. Mr. Empson, I believe, would fit it in at the point where pastoral turns into child-cult. For Lennie, the idiot, is a version of a child, or at least his friend and protector treats him on that level. I happened to have seen the film before I read this story, and find that I prefer it in the cinema medium. The American trick of understatement is almost too slick here; the sub-humanity of it parallels too closely the sub-humanity of this subject. But perhaps Steinbeck's real genius is for the cinema.

T. C. WORSLEY

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Selected List of Books

This selected and classified list of autumn and winter books is smaller than usual. That, in the circumstances, is only to be expected. But by using our smaller type and three columns, we have, at a certain cost to readability, attempted to cover as wide a range as possible. A glance at this list will indicate that in spite of the difficulties publishers are maintaining a high standard in face of the demands which the long winter evenings are likely to make on them. It should be stated that the prices given in this list are necessarily provisional.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

V. GORDON CHILDE, D.Litt., D.Sc., F.S.A., F.B.A. *Prehistoric Communities of the British Isles.* W. and R. Chambers. 18s.

SIR AUREL STEIN, K.C.I.E. *Old Routes of Western Iran.* Macmillan. 42s.

THE ARTS

GORDON ANTHONY. *The Sleeping Princess.* Routledge. 42s.

ADAM CARSE, F.R.A.M. *The Orchestra in the XVIIIth Century.* Heffer.

LORD DAVID CECIL. *The English Poets.* Collins. 3s. 6d.

FRANCOISE HENRY. *Irish Art in the Early Christian Era.* Methuen. 25s.

EDWARD LEAR. *A Book of Parrots.* Duckworth. 5s.

ALFRED LOEWENBERG. *Annals of Opera : 1597–1940.* Heffer. £4 4s.

W. J. TURNER. *English Music.* Collins. 3s. 6d.

Ed. LIONELLO VENTURI. *The Documents of Impressionism.* Faber. About 50s. Two vols.

W. WEISBACH. *Spanish Baroque Art.* Cambridge University Press. 8s. 6d.

BIOGRAPHY, MEMOIRS,

BETTY ASKWITH. *Keats.* Collins. 12s. 6d.

CYRIL W. BEAUMONT. *The Diaghilev Ballet in London.* Putnam. 10s. 6d.

TOM BELL. *Pioneering Days.* Lawrence and Wishart. 5s.

E. F. BENSON. *Final Edition.* Longmans. 15s.

Ed. EARL OF BESSBOROUGH. *Lady Bessborough and her Family Circle.* Murray. 12s. 6d.

SIR REGINALD BLOMFIELD. *Richard Norman Shaw, R.A.* Batsford. 12s. 6d.

ARTHUR BRYANT. *English Saga, 1840–1940.* Collins. 15s.

E. M. BUTLER. *Rainer Maria Rilke.* Cambridge University Press. 21s.

W. H. CHAMBERLIN. *Confessions of an Individualist.* Duckworth. 15s.

RT. HON. THE VISCOUNT CECIL OF CHELWOOD. *A Great Experiment.* Cape. 18s.

MRS. CECIL CHESTERTON. *The Chestertons.* Chapman and Hall. 12s. 6d.

J. L. CLIFFORD. *Hester Lynch Piozzi (Mrs. Thrale).* Oxford University Press. 25s.

RUPERT CROFT-COOKE. *Circus.* Methuen. 10s. 6d.

LEON DAUDET. *Clemenceau.* Hodge. 12s. 6d.

MRS. EDGAR DUGDALE. *Family Homespun.* Murray. 9s.

T. W. EARP. *Cézanne.* Duckworth. 2s. 6d.

ROBERT EMMONS. *The Life of W. R. Sickert.* Faber. 21s.

JACOB EPSTEIN. *Let There be Sculpture.* Michael Joseph. 18s.

H. A. L. FISHER. *An Unfinished Autobiography.* Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d.

The Autobiography of Eric Gill. Cape. 12s. 6d.

HERBERT GORMAN. *James Joyce.* Lane. 15s.

SIR GEORGE LEVESON GOWER. *Years of Content.* Murray. 12s. 6d.

HENRY GREEN. *Pack My Bag.* Hogarth. 7s. 6d.

G. H. HARDY. *A Mathematician's Apology.* Cambridge University Press. 3s. 6d.

GENERAL SIR CHARLES HARINGTON. *Tim Harington Looks Back.* Murray. 12s. 6d.

RALPH HILL. *Brahms.* Duckworth. 2s. 6d.

EDWARD B. HITCHCOCK. *Benes : The Man and the Statesman.* Hamish Hamilton. 12s. 6d.

RICHARD HUGHES. *The Navy is Here.* Chatto and Windus. 12s. 6d.

HERBERT HODGE. *A Shilling in my Pocket.* Michael Joseph. 10s. 6d.

VIOLET LANSBURY. *An English Woman in the U.S.S.R.* Putnam. 12s. 6d.

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About Motoring

THE UNDERGROUND GARAGE

IT is already obvious that many deep air-raid shelters will be excavated this winter. They will be constructed in such haste that little thought can be devoted to their possible utility when the war is over. Most of the constructing authorities will mentally write the capital expenditure off as a dead loss. Some vague hope may exist that the cavern may earn a small rent in years to come as a subterranean warehouse; but its interest-earning powers will be far too small to present the scheme as a financial investment. To this generalisation there is, perhaps, a single exception. Any deep air-raid shelter can be converted after the war into a garage capable of earning a good annual income on two conditions, namely, that the cavern is located at a point convenient for the car-using sections of the population, and that it is either intelligently designed for such a purpose, or can be modified at a reasonable cost.

It is folly to suppose that the terms "deep shelter" and "subterranean garage" are interchangeable. Some of the underground garages already constructed in crowded areas could only be converted into safe shelters at very considerable cost, partly because they are too shallow to furnish protection against direct hits by heavy bombs, partly because their exits would be death-traps in the event of a panic. Some of them are also very bad garages. Motorists avoid them like the plague until every alternative park is crammed. They perhaps entail very long trudges from and to the parked car. They are so studded with great roof-bearing pillars that it is difficult to manœuvre the car without grazing in a dim light to which the eye has not yet become accustomed. The bay for each individual car may be narrow, and entered at right angles from a narrow central gangway. In rush hours these long narrow chambers demand a larger staff of attendants than the management cares to maintain, and tedious delays occur.

Nobody yet knows out of what funds such deep shelters will be constructed, but if municipal rates bear even part of the burden, wise local councils will guard against such costly projects being useless in days of peace. Their engineers should be instructed to consider alternative uses, of which in many areas the garage is infinitely the most promising. Such a motive will not affect the main outlines of construction, but might influence quite a number of secondary points. In one town, for example, there is talk of a horizontal excavation into the face of a hill at the back of the town. That location would be admirable for A.R.P. purposes, but useless as a post-war garage, being too distant from stations, shops, and places of entertainment. A central position, available for vertical excavation, would be just as convenient for sheltering the artisan population in raids, and would also be convertible into a magnificent and much-needed garage later on. Again, the underground car park should approximate in plan to a square, rather than to an elongated oblong, because the former concentrates the entire staff, and panders to the motorist's hatred of much trudging about. Both plans are equally suited to A.R.P. purposes, so that the square should always have preference. A garage needs no more overhead cover than is implied by the overhead load, be it street or buildings; a shelter requires at least 30ft. of overhead cover in this war, and should there ever be another war, 60ft. of overhead cover might be desirable. The possibility of converting a deep shelter into a two- or even three-storey garage should be borne in mind. There are two possible systems of egress and entry into such caverns—the ramp and the lift. A large A.R.P. shelter might best be approached by a large number of narrow ramps—hurrying crowds would create potential dangers down a wide single ramp. But an underground car park requires either very large lifts, or very wide ramps; so the available space should be so laid out that a large lift could be built after the war, or a multiple ramp converted into a wide single ramp.

Again, the floor space of an A.R.P. shelter can be of any arbitrary dimensions, and the number of its occupants can be adjusted to those dimensions without wastage. But an efficient car park must be designed to a matter

of a foot or two unless space is to be wasted. There is an optimum size and shape for a floor designed to house any given number of cars economically and conveniently; driving on reverse must either be eliminated, or reduced to a single short movement in a straight line. This entails the car spaces being entered on the skew, instead of at angles, and it demands certain gangways of certain widths. If the floor is laid out solely as an A.R.P. shelter, and later converted into a car park, the conversion may waste space for several hundred cars, which at 6*d.* for three hours may sacrifice hundreds of pounds in fees every year.

It follows that wherever deep shelters are likely to be built in localities which are short of car-parking accommodation, the borough engineer should immediately inspect several large subterranean garages, and pick the brains not only of the private firm or municipality operating such garages, but also of the local owners who use or avoid these garages. If he takes this precaution, he will find himself very talkative when the design of any local A.R.P. shelter comes to be discussed.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 558

Set by Roderick Random

Publishers are in the habit of using quotations from the reviewers for advertising their books. Competitors are invited to invent a set of *three* quotations suitable for advertising any *one* of the forthcoming books listed in this issue. Success in imitating the style of individual reviewers or journals will be highly marked.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, c/o Cornwall Press, 1-6, Paris Garden, Stamford Street, S.E.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, October 28th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

3. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 556

Set by C. Urchin

Since the music-halls are closed, we offer the usual prizes for the best baroque description of a music-hall artist.

Report by C. Urchin

Evidently the living baroque is easier to enjoy than to convey in print. Diminutive bowlers, crimson noses, elastic moustaches, the eyeglass and cane, the bald cranium, the henna-ed beehive, creased smiles and gin-cracked singing notes—these were present in plenty and yet unaccountably they fell a little flat. Competitors who went back to old days seem to have found the memory fading.

> Her wink, her walk, her songs, her shout—
> Each innuendo made its hit—
> Gay ruin Cromwell knocked about
> a bit.

These lines (from Gerald Summers) would have been agreeable enough if they had ushered in verses of a deeper dye; but alas! there the fun ended, the rest was lemonade. If one is going to tackle such a subject as Marie Lloyd—perhaps it needs an Ardizzone—one should abrace oneself to her own level of anecdote; that grand manner, which would show itself in a half-drunken song at the Bedford music-hall, or a stream of oaths issuing from a delayed taxi in Oxford Street, or a shower of pennies scattered from her balcony in Golders Green, has to be met with verbal largesse. And Mr. Summers in his choice of words, in his "appreciation," was altogether too reserved and timid. Much the same applies to others who have tried their hand on Dan Leno, Grock, Harry Tate, and—coming to the present—Billy Bennett.

There was no need, though, for anyone to be overawed by the legendary great when a glance round music-halls of the last few years would have provided riches of caricature. What of the comedian with shoes as long as skis, who could perform remarkable leaning feats while he sang? What about the electric-lighted noses of clowns, the hippopantomime curves of the ballad-singer and *diseuse?* Nowhere except in a music-hall can the spectator enjoy a grotesquerie which expresses itself in a fat man riding on a toy bicycle or a clown discarding ten dress suits in order to emerge wearing a football jersey and playing the violin. And this atmosphere of visual paradox has its touch of poetry. The acrobatics of masters like Colleano or the Zimris are superbly graceful; few moments in modern drama can match the lyrical surprise of doves suddenly thrown out into a smoky auditorium.

But either this sort of thing did not catch the fancy of competitors, or it's more difficult to put on paper than I had imagined. The word baroque, too, may have induced a heavy-handed zest. William Stewart's "Star Turn" I enjoyed in parts:

> The man was fatter than Falstaff . . . dressed in the semi-clerical garb affected usually by Mr. George Robey. . . . His red nose was redder, his thick neck more reptilian than anything I had ever encountered before, and abnormally small feet added an almost unbearable touch of the grotesque to his incredible figure . . . When he spoke, the very soul of unsavoury innuendo seeped up through his hoarse and wheezy tubes. He told the story of the Spanish nobleman and the grass widow: he sang, with horrible fascination, of a girl with a German-silver stomach; he raked the garbage heaps of Europe for bawdy examples. . . . I have said nothing of his gestures; but these were so far from being restricted by the man's stupendous superstructure of flesh that his apparently clumsy limbs performed acrobatic antics of unspeakable significance, while his countenance, compounded, so it seemed, of soft, painted rubber, went through the whole gamut of expressions which could appeal in the smallest way to a man's lower sensibilities. He was colossal, magnificent . . .

There was gusto, too, in Lucie Mildner's portrait of an Edwardian dazzler:

> The opulent amplitude of those thighs and bosom; the hour-glass waist; those shapely pink silk legs—how deliciously you slapped them!—tapering down to those incredibly tiny shoes, incredibly high instep and incredibly high heels; that jaunty cap with the pheasant's feather surmounting that charming little feminine face; the all embracing dazzle of a smile displaying the perfect pearlies of a tooth paste announcement; those bluest of blue eyes and blue all round; the blackest of black brows contrasting with the goldest of gold curls, the reckless boyish air coupled with such full-blooded femininity.

Neither of these, however, seemed to me to reach prize level. On the whole Charles Furbank, through not attempting too much, has been most successful. He deserves, I think, a prize of one guinea.

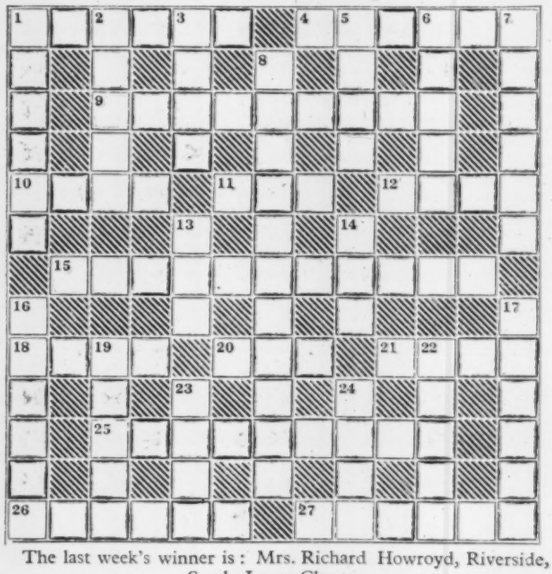
PHYLLIS ROBINS

I thought it was the interval when she came on, so I was moving towards the bar when she called out for someone to come on the stage, and there I was, caught. They all pushed me forward and said, "Go on, Joe, it's nothing!"—The lousy heroes, they didn't have to go up there. What could I do? "Hallo, Big Boy!" she said. Christ! I felt a fool; I'm not as big as all that. "How are you?" she said. "All right," I said. I could hear all the others laughing. "What's so funny about that," I thought. "You'd all look very smart up here." Then she started to sing her song. You know, the one about her being lost in a fog with a dog, and would some kind gentleman please take her home. I was supposed to be the kind gentleman. They all knew what that meant; you should've heard the girls screaming. I wouldn't have minded if it hadn't been on the stage. She looked all right, you know, the silver haired, small featured, good figured type; not like you see about in the town in the ordinary way. Then she stopped her song and started assing about again. I gave her a pinch, but she pretended not to notice it; I suppose that wasn't in the act. Then she asked me if I liked her, so I put my arm round her; that wasn't in the act either, but she didn't mind. Then she kissed me; it was all right. I wished it didn't have to be on the stage like that with all the people watching.

CHARLES FURBANK

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 3

Set by V. S.



The last week's winner is: Mrs. Richard Howroyd, Riverside, Sandy Lane, Chester.

ACROSS

1. L/S (6).
4. The pig has swallowed the lot and looks rather bilious. (6).
9. 5,00 + 500,00 is 1,000, though it's all superstitiousness. (9).
10 & 11. Last o' the married lot That got the marriage dot. (7).
11. See 10.
12. Formerly hidden in Eton cellars (4).
15. In flower form. (11).
18. A cross is the symbol of the enemy. (4).
20. One honourable representative of the devil. (3).
21. Make Jack be a priest. (4).
25. The singing bird digs in his heels in the garden. (9).
26. Not just this or that—you've got it to the letter. (6).
27. Mammy lost her head and made an exit. (6).

DOWN

1. Fifty is a fifth of fifty, or so we hear. (6).
2. 6/6d, if that is perfectly clear. (5).
3. Screen for the back door? (4).
5. Between maid's change of situation? (4).
6. The French man's paramour sounds fruity. (5).
7. West Indian females. (6).
8. Why vapour about love? Say it with flowers. (4-2-1-4).
13. The horse as a public utility. (3).
14. "That little something extra . . ." (3).
16. Hound & Horn. (6).
17. Solemn characters move about in this island. (6).
19. A tenant has been found for that bit of land. (5).
22. Down with the French on the Swiss border! (5).
23. What's - her - name played softly to the bitter end. (4).
24. The antelope up and chanted. (4).

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

A	C	I	D	O	S	I	S	■	R	A	T	S
V	■	M	■	R	■	M	■	I	■	■	■	L
E	■	■	S	T	R	A	N	D	S	■	R	A
R	■	C	■	S	■	G	■	A	■	W	■	T
■	B	A	D	■	L	E	O	■	S	H	O	T
A	■	N	■	P	■	S	■	T	■	I	■	E
B	A	T	M	A	N	■	S	I	S	T	E	R
S	■	R	■	L	■	C	■	T	■	I	■	N
I	B	I	S	■	C	O	D	■	I	N	G	■
N	■	P	■	D	■	G	■	P	■	G	■	M
T	O	■	L	O	B	E	L	I	A	■	■	A
H	■	■	■	E	■	N	■	E	■	M	■	I
E	R	O	S	■	S	T	U	R	G	E	O	N

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," "New Statesman and Nation," c/o Cornwall Press, Paris Garden, Stamford Street, London, S.E.1.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

GILT-EDGED BOOMLET — PATRIOTISM IN WAR BONDS—UNILEVER—HOME RAILWAYS

As 3½ per cent. War Loan nears its ex dividend date (25th October) it always rises, but it was pleasantly surprising to see it quoted at 102¾ after one of the worst nights of bombing. The roaring strength of War Loan actually induced buyers to come forward for 3½ per cent. Conversion, Locals and Old Consols, so that the long term rate of interest fell by nearly 6*d.* to £3 7*s.* 0*d.* per cent. There is talk of a coming new loan, which I do not credit. There is, of course, no reason why the gilt-edged market should not remain a firm front until the private investor wakes up to the imminence of inflation. Mr. Keynes has lulled him for the time being with soothing words, but *The Economist* has coldly analysed the creation of money in the first year of the war and has found what there was of it definitely inflationary. Government expenditure to the amount of about £300 millions was financed out of newly created bank credit. This, it argues, was small in comparison with the sums of money in circulation and "might be excused like the servant girl's illegitimate baby on the ground that it is only a very little one." But *The Economist* doubts whether this favourable record could be repeated in the second year of the war. Total expenditure will then be at the rate of at least £4,000 millions, of which revenue will not find more than £1,600 millions. Unless steps are taken to secure a vast expansion of voluntary savings or alternatively compulsory savings, the amount of the gap between revenue and expenditure remaining to be made good by the creation of credit may be four times as large in the second year of war as in the first. But the private investor will not begin to think these things before next April when the Budget is introduced.

* * *

Many investors write to me about their patriotic duty to subscribe to Government war bonds. Perhaps I should try to correct a confusion of thought. It does not benefit the State if an investor sells an old holding and buys Government stock. The old holdings sold have to be bought by others. But it does benefit the State if any income additional to the normal is put into Government war bonds or, where no additional income is being earned, if an investor reduces his consumption expenditures, leaving a surplus after the satisfaction of his reduced wants, and then subscribes to war bonds with these newly created savings. Institutional investors seem to be as confused about it as small investors—largely because they have received letters from the Governor of the Bank which are models of mental confusion. Insurance companies have been asked to put all their accruing income into Government bonds, which they do loyally, but when they sell old holdings on the Stock Exchange they need not reinvest in Government bonds. Indeed, if they sell one share because they consider it dear and buy another because they consider it cheap, they are performing their real duty—they are correcting disparities in investment values and producing easier conditions in the stock markets which make for the liquidity (and solvency) of the private investor. This is helping the Inland Revenue and the war effort.

* * *

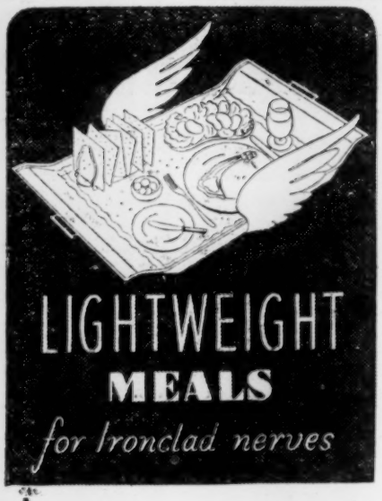
It is good news for the ordinary shareholders of the British part of Lever Brothers and Unilever that they will not be prejudiced, under their dividend equalisation arrangements, by the failure of the Dutch part to pay their dividends. Ordinarily the profits of the British Company are applied first to the payment of the preference share dividends of the British Company, and then to the preference share dividends of the Dutch Company, if earnings of that company do not suffice. The British directors hold, however, that the failure of the Dutch Company to pay their preference dividends is due solely to enemy action and not to lack of funds, which alone could give the Dutch preference shareholders a claim to rank prior to the ordinary shareholders of the British Company. Trustees have been appointed to see that when the war is over an amount will be paid to shareholders of the Dutch Company which will be equivalent to anything which shareholders in the English Company may have received, thus carrying out the equalisation agreement between the two companies which was made in 1927. Last year, after reserving £800,000 for the Dutch shareholders, the English Company paid an ordinary dividend of 10 per cent. and there is nothing in the directors' statement to anticipate that this dividend will not be repeated this year. If this proves to be correct the ordinary shares look attractive at 24*s.* 6*d.* to yield £8 3*s.* 0*d.* per cent. Nor should the preference shares be neglected.

	Present Price	Approx. Yield %
Lever 7% preference.. ..	24/6	£5 15 6
Lever 8% preference.. ..	23/6	£6 18 0

As these preference shares stood as high as 35*s.* and 35*s.* 6*d.* respectively in 1937 there is something to go for besides income.

* * *

The difficulties of making prices in the midst of broken glass outside the "House" have not helped the Home Railway market. Stockholders are disturbed by the delay in granting the last application for an increase in charges, for they know that without this increase, the extra cost of operations and of air raid damage will take away the profit out of the railways. Better nationalise them at once.



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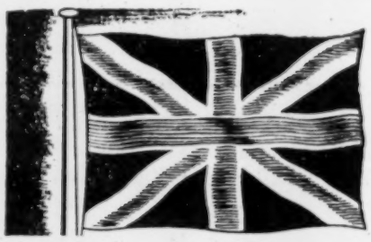

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

FABIAN LECTURE
Saturday, October 26th, 2.15 p.m.
Prof. W. M. MACMILLAN on
"FREEDOM FOR COLONIAL PEOPLES"
Central Hall, Westminster, S.W.1.

Tickets, 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d. (reduction on series of three) AT DOOR or from FABIAN SOCIETY, 11 Dartmouth Street, S.W.1 (WHI. 3077).

Oct. 19. HERBERT READ on "CULTURE AND LIBERTY."

THE FABIAN SOCIETY regrets to have to announce that Mr. J. B. Priestly is unavoidably prevented, by duties of great National Importance, from delivering his lecture on "Culture and Liberty" on October 19th. Herbert Read, D.Lit., has very kindly consented to take his place at two days' notice. Dr. Read was formerly Professor of Fine Art at Edinburgh University and later Lecturer in Art at Liverpool. Among his more recent writings are *Art and Society*, 1937, and *Poetry and Anarchism*, 1938.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, October 20, at 11 a.m., J. McCabe. "Is the Dark Age Returning?" Admission free.

ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Morning Service only. Oct. 20th at 11.30, H. J. BLACKHAM: "SCIENCE FOR HUMANITY."

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